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THE

MYSTERY OF INIQUITY:

A PASSAGE OF THE

SECRET HISTORY OF AMERICAN POLITICS,

ILLUSTRATED BY

A VIEW OF METROPOLITAN SOCIETY.

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THE MYSTERIES of political history, occasioned by the imperfect presentation of the facts which are the essential causes of great public movements and events, are always numerous, not only in the annals of the past, but in the cotemporaneous records of the present. The journals of the day furnish little more than the actual results; of the secret causes and agencies they give little information. In European history, this more valuable instruction is generally given in the "secret memoirs" of the various courts, and in the private correspondence of statesmen, princes, courtiers and intriguers. In the American Republic, this field is to be occupied by facts from sources less accessible. It is a department which may yet be filled. For the present, a single chapter may suffice, on one branch of the subject.

THE MACHINERY OF ELECTION FRAUDS in the city of New York, is a matter so important to the fate and history of the republican system, and yet so remote from the knowledge of even the most intelligent politicians, as to be worthy of special and elaborate notice in an "AMERICAN Review," on whose pages may be sought, in other times, portions of the history of the age, as evidences of the success or failure of this first experiment in practical democracy—actual popular self-government. That such frauds exist, has long been notorious. No New York politician would risk a reputation for veracity and intelligence so far as to deny it. But of the details, the system, the extent of these operations, much remains to be communicated, even to those best informed and most active in the political movements of the last few years. The subject, however, is one not easily investigated. The success of these frauds was of course insured only by profound secresy, and by subordination and obedience among the inferior agents, excluding each from a knowledge of any more than his own guilty part. Those who alone know all, or enough to show the extent and character of the operation, are so prominent in position and in the profits of the iniquity, as to be above the reach of ordinary inducements to betray the facts of which they themselves were the chief authors.

The investigation is, therefore, beset with difficulties, tending to produce despair of success on the part of any who, believing the general fact, seek the particulars and the proofs. It requires singular gifts,—courage, energy, and pertinacity, of a peculiar order, sustained by enthusiastic devotion to the cause of truth and justice, and by the hope and prospect of results mighty beyond prudent expectation. It demands also, exclusive appropriation of time, study, patience, observation and reflection, and forces the encounter of many annoyances and dangers, incurred by the necessary association with abandoned and desperate men, in whose experience the truth is contained. MONEY, too, as well as costly time and labor, is wanted, in amount beyond ordinary means, for uses which are

essential to the main purpose. Other requirements—all that can be imagined—included in the conditions of success, or even progress.

Guarded, by these difficulties, against the perils of inquiry and detection, the authors of these frauds have hardened in confidence, cool determination and impudence. After an election, the defeated partisans soon forget the inquiry into causes; and it is impossible to arouse them to the painful labor of searching for the mode and means of their own irretrievable loss. The fruitless contest once fully past, disappointment vents itself in vain curses; and wrath soon evaporates in threats as idle as the wind. The combination of force, kept up in hope of success, vanishes in defeat; and the recently associated agents of the defeated party meet again only as strangers, until a new movement inspires new hope, in another contest—while the victorious leaders of faction divide the spoils, with a security which can tolerate no feeling towards their baffled foes but indifference or contempt.

The great and manifold difficulties thus shown, as besetting such an investigation, have, in this instance, been met by the possession of the means and qualifications enumerated, to an extent which can be better demonstrated by the results attained, than by preliminary statements, which might seem prematurely boastful or egotistical. It is enough now to say, that the unremitting labor of many months has been given to this task, in total exclusion of all other interests and occupations; and the facts are therefore presented, from the outset, with a confidence in the full mastery of the whole subject and its necessary proofs, which will be shared by all, as the development progresses.

THE TIME selected for this revelation is peculiarly adapted to the accomplishment of its best purposes, and to the acquirement of the public confidence in its truth, and its independence of personal or temporary advantages. The great contest on which so many public and private interests depended, and which bore so many away from the control of moral principle by its powerful excitements—is now closed; and its momentous, irreversible result has been registered. Not even a local object now remains to be promoted, either in the shape of a Charter Election, with its corporation patronage in view of the contestants, or a State Election, with its higher gifts and dignities, with its Gubernatorial and Congressional honors and its influence on the National mind The period between this and any future important action by popular suffrage will be so long, that no "effect" or temporary excitement could be produced, and no successful perversion or permanent mis-representation of facts hoped for. Whatever may be put forth seeming to any worthy of denial, confutation or condemnation,—the date and circumstances "leave ample room and verge enough" to enlighten and correct public opinion, and vindicate all claiming a hearing or redress, before the judgment of the people has been pronounced in its only effective form—THE BALLOT.

Equally is discarded every pretense of impressing the public mind anywhere with the sense of implied injustice done to any individual candidate or party or cause, by a decision wrongfully obtained or erroneously recorded. For the vindication either of the man or the people, such a demonstration would be valueless. Both are already placed on higher grounds. The character and principles of those who by their votes maintained the right, are enough, and are well enough known by all Christendom, to vindicate them beyond suspicion—and to maintain them in as much honor as ever accrued to wronged patriotism.

This investigation, its purposes, its possible consequences, have no designed relation to the advantage or prospects of any person. It is no appeal, no writ of error against the judgment of that tribunal which, right or wrong, renders the last and highest of human decisions. The whole inquiry is simply a *post mortem* examination, with the purpose of ascertaining the cause of death and the manner and instrument of the crime, for the instruction and security of all who shall come after, that those who distrust the people's sense, and despair of justice from the public judgment, may derive encouragement from these evidences of a fraud in the mere means of declaring and manifesting that judgment.

As a contribution to the history of man, it will be valuable; and its worst developments will but elevate the character of the great whole, while they display the abominations of a few. Men of this and other countries, enslaved or free, will be the wiser for this unfolding of truths. All that was desired by the patriotic, the wise, the good, as to the moral SIGNIFICANCE of the late great trial of principles

and men, will be obtained in the fruits of this inquiry; and it will place in history a lesson of renewed hope and fortitude to republican faith. With these facts established, the friends of liberty may yet rely on the just judgment of a free people, as to the best exercise of their power.

THE CAUSE, THE MANNER AND THE INSTRUMENT of the result cannot be credibly made known, until the nature of these agencies is developed, by an exhibition of the character of a peculiar and hitherto undescribed portion of the population of "THE GREAT CITY." The resources of political crime are found in the social elements and combinations of the metropolitan community. The seat of actual power in this true democracy has long been the subject of a problem yet unsolved. With the source of new principles and dogmas, *origination* of purposes, this question has nothing to do. But to ascertain the means of their accomplishment by the ballot, is an object at once momentous in interest and practicable in effect.

Within a circle of three miles' radius, on and around the Island of Manhattan, may now be found nearly half a million of people. Very few of these know anything of the characters, pursuits or relations of their fellow-citizens. Society is here completely divided into classes, arranged generally according to occupations, separated from each other by distinctions of property, of employment, of association and habit. BUSINESS is the one great word which fully expresses the main object and leading idea of the community. It characterizes the mass, and gives the city all its greatness, fame, wealth and power. Absorbed in the pursuit of gain, the vast majority of the people are ever sedulously practicing the familiar precept, that "every man should mind his own business, and let others mind theirs." The comparatively few who are devoted to pleasure and fashion exclusively, to mere expenditure without acquisition, constitute no distinct class here, and give character to no class in society. As far as wealth furnishes title to distinction, and justifies high claims to rank and influence, it is from resources increasing by thrift, not stationary by free use, or diminishing by extravagance. The richest here are still laboriously accumulating new riches by active "business." No withdrawal from the pursuits in which their property was obtained could add to their dignity or share of public respect, any more than it could to their happiness. The few idlers who "live upon their means" are but tolerated, not honored, among their more active associates, who rejoice in daily augmentation of affluence.

From the jurist, the professor, the divine, the banker, and the lord of a square mile of buildings, or of a score of floating palaces, to the industrious day laborer, whose hand hews or places the materials of the structures of wealth and pride, all conditions of men are here alike in purpose, and regard none as ranking above them because exempt from the wish or need of gain. Such are the mass of society—such in simplicity and unity of purpose, in patient, hopeful industry, in devotion to business, and in harmony of feeling and action. They are a very large majority of the permanent residents of the city, and, by natural right, and true democratic republican principle, should rule it, and direct its power and influence in the government of the State and Union. But it happens that though they are many, THEY ARE NOT ALL.

There is a class remote in aim and character from these, alien from their sympathies, and indifferent or hostile to their prosperity,—disdaining their objects and pursuits, or despairing of success in them. Though the beneficent influences of protective republican legislation thus far make them comparatively few, they are formidable by their relative smallness of number, and their consequent monopoly of the mighty resources of lawless adventure, fraud, violence and crime. In every great city, gathers a throng of men, desperate from various causes, of which want is the predominant one. With some, it is want of the absolute necessaries of life; with many, it is merely the want of the abundant means of the gratification of vicious impulses and extravagant fancies. Most of them have, at one time or another, made attempts to acquire a livelihood or a fortune by honest, regular means; but, failing of success, either by error or calamity, they have concluded that those who secure comfort or wealth by lawful pursuits, do it only by knavery, carefully disguised in external respectability. The unhappiness induced by misfortune, takes the form of a peculiar misanthropy. They declare and believe that no man is truly honest, and that those who are reputed virtuous and high-principled, only seem so. This contempt of others, and others' pursuits, relieves their pangs of discontent, envy, or despair, by raising

their self-respect, as they compare themselves with the distorted images of society which they have formed. Having decided that "there is no virtue extant," they resolve that they are better than others in pretending to none—that they are peculiarly honorable, because they frankly and truly avow their dishonesty.

The principles thus formed, suggest and direct a life of adventure, recklessness, frequent dishonesty, vicious indulgence, and unlawful art. They become gamblers, gambling-house keepers, writers and publishers of obscene and licentious books and papers, sham-brokers, "Tombs-lawyers," "straw-bail" men, "skinners," "touchers," professional perjurers, police decoy-ducks, and "stool-pigeons," receivers of stolen goods, sharpers, impostors, prize-fighters, mock-auctioneers, watch-stuffers, pocket-book droppers, brothel owners and bullies, cock-fighters, dog-stealers, street beggars, and so on through innumerable grades and inventions of roguery, down to counterfeiters, pickpockets, incendiaries, highway robbers, and burglars. The English language, originally too poor to express all these abominations, has been enriched by the addition of new terms, coined or compounded to represent the novelties of crime in the American metropolis.

All these designated occupations, and more, not here specified, exist in New York, though unknown, even by name, to a large portion of the population. Various as are these forms of villany, they all harmonize in principle and purpose. The actors in these crimes, strong in the consciousness of their numbers and common sympathies, constitute a distinct community, with rules and resources which make them formidable in every relation to the commonwealth, but especially in their power and influence in party politics. To understand their agencies in these movements, it must be noted that there are ranks and classes among them, distinguished from each other by the ordinary varieties of pursuits, associations, means, intelligence, manners, dress, and style of living. Though of one accord in principle, all seeking their own good by the injury of others, they vary in the means of accomplishing their radically evil purposes. The better portion of them (the better because pretending to less of worldly honor) seek their bare livelihood in avowed violation of the law of the land, which has its own means of efficient vindication. The worst and most dangerous portion neither steal nor murder "within the statute." Their crimes, are moral, not technical. They take, without rendering an equivalent, their thousands, while the common thief but pilfers in units. The vulgar criminal walks in rags, while they shine in costly apparel and jewelry. The mere pick-pocket, in swift and just retribution, finds a felon's punishment and infamy, and a felon's dishonored grave; but they triumph in wholesale crime, and flaunt their splendid livery of guilt, among the noblest and proudest of the great republic. They even sit on the very throne of justice, and dispense its dread revenge on their meaner and more unfortunate associates, who are doomed to evince the terrors of an imperfect law by the sufferings of the prison, the manacle or the gallows. The children of misfortune, who alone are reached by vindictive human justice, are but the creatures—the tools—of the children of extravagance and pride, whose more dangerous vices constitute the patronage and countenance of vulgar crime.

The whole class, thus characterized, numbers thousands of citizens of New York—all VOTERS. It has hardly occurred, as yet, to those curious in moral and political statistics, to enumerate this *unregistered* portion of society. Their numbers, their names, their occupations, have no place in the "business directory" of New York, though their political and social action is felt everywhere. At the head of this great league and community of wickedness, and especially directing the action of the whole in politics, is a body of men, commonly known by the term "sporting characters," constituting the aristocracy of roguery. This higher class of adventurers are often found partially disguised under the nominal profession of honorable callings, such as those of brokers, lawyers, occasionally merchants and shopkeepers; and some of them are proprietors, where they have managed their various unlawful gains with prudence. But all are gamblers, and derive their real profits from the resources of that infamous pursuit. In dress, manners, equipage, and all the externals of life, they are ambitious and ostentatious, often seeking to intrude themselves among the respectable classes of society. They keep fine horses, famous for speed and performances on the "Avenues" and the "Island," driving them in elegantly modeled light vehicles, and compete with

wealthy country gentlemen and sportsmen in the breed of their dogs, in the finish of their guns, and the various apparatus of the sports of the field. Their tastes, amusements, occupations and characters, differ little from those of the profligate, gambling, sporting aristocracy of Britain, the members of the fashionable clubs of the West End of the British metropolis, constituting a large portion of the nobility and gentry, who, placed by hereditary wealth and distinction above the necessity of useful occupation, devote their lives to a laborious competition with coachmen, jockeys, dog-fanciers, blacklegs, prize-fighters, huntsmen and gamekeepers. Proud of this association of character and identity of pursuit, the American "sporting aristocracy" look down upon the honorable portion of their fellow-citizens engaged in the successful, though laborious occupations of the professions, trades, arts and commerce, with very much the same feeling as do the profligate lordlings across the water on the substantial merchants and mechanics of the city of London, and with quite as much real cause for their assumed superiority in the scale of being.

In the gambling houses of Park-Place, Vesey street, Broadway, Park Row, &c., on all the great race-courses, often at the fashionable watering-places and summer resorts, the concourse of political adventurers around the great seats of legislation, these fellows are to be found exercising their gifts and gratifying their fancies for pleasure or display—entrapping their victims, the heirs of great estates, or weak men, suddenly raised by speculation or other accident, to the possession of wealth. But these occupations, parades and pastimes, are secondary to their main business, and merely serve to fill the intervals of a more important series of engagements. To these gambling gentry, the great game is POLITICS. In its splendid combination of chances and boundless facilities for cheating, imposture and trickery, they see a worthy field for the exercise of their peculiar arts; and they enter it with a cool confidence in their own possession of the needful qualifications for success in it, which places them beyond the competition of those less versed and experienced in corrupt human nature, less familiar with the agencies of fraud and crime, or less unscrupulous about their employment for such purposes.

The larger portion of this class of men, hardened and chilled by their manner of life—with native sympathies and generous impulses destroyed, and with passions schooled into conformity to the most effectual means of their own gratification—regard the ordinary contests of political parties with as little interest in the pending issues, as they would feel in the ultimate prosperity of any corporation in whose stock they might speculate for a time, merely to transfer it to some incautious purchaser who might be induced to take it at more than its true value. Such, in the abstract, would always be their view of partisan strifes, holding themselves supremely indifferent to any circumstance but the chance of securing large gains by heavy odds in their favor on the results. BETTING ON ELECTIONS is with them a study, or trade, or craft, the most important branch of their regular business: and the mode of securing gain to themselves is the same as in those manipulations of cards and dice which to the dupe only are games of chance, while to the practiced cheat they truly are games of SKILL. Thus they play in politics, where the ballot is the die, and the voter is the card. They play at THIS game also with "loaded dice" and "MARKED CARDS." And whenever they enter into the business of elections with money staked upon the result, they proceed with as much confidence in the production of the majorities on which their winnings depend, as they do in their gambling-houses, where all the *supposed* chances of the faro-table, the roulette, the *rouge et noir*, the dice box, the cut, the shuffle and the deal, are converted, by their knavish arts and secret marks and mechanical contrivances, into positive certainties of fradulent gain.

The recent developments of Mr. Green, the reformed gambler, in his various public lectures and communications on this subject, have made these illustrations sufficiently intelligible, and furnish abundant evidence of the universal dishonesty of the whole gamester-craft and profession.

Yet these men are not so artificial and impartial as to be totally without opinions and preferences in politics. The political bias of the whole class is instinctive towards that party which seeks power by patronizing crime, encouraging and defending lawlessness, violence and fraud, and which abuses the possession of power to reward, patronize and promote the

evil agencies which secure its success,—the party which appeals constantly to the envy and prejudice of the poor against the rich,—which wars against the interests of "business men," and against that policy of credit and protection by which are secured the rewards of enterprise, honesty, thrift and industry. Did every man in that community of crime act according to the principles and instincts of his caste, there would not be an exception to the universal application of the rule by which their associations in party politics are determined. But there are among them some, who, though identified with them in disregard of public opinion and the moral sense of respectable society, in irregular and adventurous lives and in depraved and sensual tastes, have yet some remains of an originally better nature about them, some dash of the heroic in their perverted spirit, some sentiment of true manly honor among those artificial notions of it which they share with desperadoes and outlaws. There are a few such, who, however degraded in principle and darkened in moral perception, refuse to follow the bent of their order in politics, and who, though indifferent on ordinary party questions, do occasionally act with those that seek to honor the honorable, and discard fraud and falsehood from their schemes and policy.

Though there is not one in a hundred of "the sporting class" who can claim this exemption, yet it should be regarded in a statement designed as this is to be exact in every particular. There are not known to be ten—it is hardly possible that there are twenty—of the gambling fraternity who differ from their associates in their political sentiments; and these are consequently excluded from familiarity with the details of their political action.

There are also many hangers-on, occasional associates, dupes or pupils of the tribe, sons of respectable or wealthy people, falsely ambitious and dashing young "business men," who frequent gambling-houses and similar dens of roguery and vice, but have neither experience, sense nor desperation to make them anything more than "honorary" members of the order, or to admit them to the mysteries of the craft. There are many thriving merchants, brokers, professional men, shipmasters and others of various respectable pursuits, including some from the country, occasionally here, mingling with these licentious banditti,—ambitious and even vain of association with them, but alien from their sympathies, and elevated above them in opportunities of gain without the plea of *necessity* for lawless adventure and infamous occupation. Totally independent of all these *volunteers*, both in counsel and action, are the class before described. Occasional but rare personal sympathies of character and habit render permanent their connexion with these incidental associates: but, in general, these are but their subjects and victims.

The characteristics of these different social classes embody the hidden elements of political principle and power—the secret of American political history. In the class of the adventurous, the vicious, the desperate, the lawless, the criminal—is found a unity of feeling and purpose, which pervades the whole in their moral association, without reference to accidental and often temporary and transient differences in rank, situation, and means of comfort, pleasure or display. Through all these widely-variant grades of villany,—from the aristocratic gambler and faro-banker in Park Place or Barclay street, down to the copper-tossing ragged vagrant of Corlaer's Hook, the occasional inmate of Blackwell's Island and the brothel-bully and "toucher" of the Five Points or West Broadway, there extends a wondrous social sympathy, a conscious harmony of purpose and electric unity of action, not more fearful in aspect than woful in experiment to the honest, industrious, peaceful portion of society. Strong in this Masonic fellowship and secret mutual aid in violation of the public laws and morals, they fear not to attempt any crime, however startling to the popular apprehension, and however audacious in its defiance of municipal agencies of justice. The murder of the wretched Corlies on the most frequented corner of Broadway at the most stirring hour of the evening, only two years ago, was not effected without the deliberate premeditation and coöperation of a large body of this very class of men, who did not hesitate afterwards publicly to avow their approval of the crime and their resolution to screen the perpetrators at all hazards. Similar impunity has been enjoyed in other cases even more shocking to the public mind. Who does not know of the horrible case of the murder of Mary Rogers? Her fate was and is NO MYSTERY to some. The author of that hideous, horrible, unnatural butchery of a young

and beautiful female *was known then* to some officers of justice, and is known now. Hundreds of criminals of that and minor grades are sheltered by the same awful combination of criminal agencies, and are discharged from actual arrest and imprisonment, often without form of trial, by collusions of judicial as well as executive agents, in league with the secret community of blood and fraud. They stand to one purpose, and stand by each other in its accomplishment.

With such traits, connexions, and powers, this class become, in political movements, the lords of the land, the controllers of government, the arbiters of the commonwealth's destiny. That they can be such is evident—that they have been and are such, will soon be shown.

"Business men" continually assure active politicians who solicit their coöperation, that they "have no time to attend to politics," that they "can take no part in it because it injures business." Those who have been herein described hear this and rejoice; on this current declaration they base their action. They *have* time for it, and they attend to it *for* the business men. It will not injure *their* business.

Thus have the industrial and intellectual orders of this community prostrated themselves and their country before the Mammon of unrighteousness. Thus have they forgotten and disowned their most sacred rights and duties, and left them to the off-scouring and scum of civilized society. Thus by them "the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away in the midst of the battle." Thus, the interests of the people, unfortunately entrusted to the enterprising and respectable portion of the community, were by them betrayed in the hour of the commonwealth's greatest need, the crisis of peace or war, of order or lawlessness, of the protection or abandonment of the interests of the governed by the government. Yes! that very class—the self-righteous, self-wise, who most frequently exclaim against the imagined evils of universal suffrage, who so often lament the admission of the poor, the uneducated, the foreign-born, the vicious, and the criminal, to the elective franchise, and who would be glad to see that franchise restricted to themselves, —they, and "nobody else," have proved themselves unworthy of a freeman's birthright, and incapable of their share of the responsibilities of a republican government. The poor man always votes. The prosperous man basely and indolently neglects this great duty in multiplied instances; and even when he pretends to perform it, often makes it of no good effect, by a varying and equivocating ballot, thrown sometimes for one set of principles and sometimes for another.

Noting these facts and their practical bearing, with an acuteness cultivated by long experience, the adventurous and dissolute establish and defend their position in politics by an unanswerable reference to them. "Why permit the policy of the government to be directed for the benefit or protection of those who will neither act for themselves in politics nor second or support those who act and labor for them? Rich and prosperous men, and those devoted to the pursuits of regular traffic, are almost universally selfish, narrow-minded, ungrateful, uncharitable. By the possession of these very traits they acquire their wealth or competence. They are glad to have the less fortunate work for them *gratis*. They never pay for service rendered, except in cases where the law can compel them. In buying and selling, in employing and paying the laborer, it is their rule to 'take every advantage,' to get as much more for their merchandize and money than its real value as possible, by misrepresentation, exaction, or the necessities of those who deal with them or labor for them. Men do not grow rich or remain so by generosity, truthfulness, patriotism, or high-minded consideration of the good of others and the common benefit of society. We, however, denounced by them as immoral and dishonest, and excluded from 'good society,' are free from many of 'the vices of trade,' though in our way we may often be less careful to keep 'within the statute.' We may cheat the world and violate the law of the land; but we never cheat one another as they do, and we never break our own rules nor disregard our rules and pledges of honor among ourselves. We esteem ourselves better gentlemen and better men. The higher classes, the privileged orders, the would-be aristocracy of wealth would wheedle us and use us the day before election, and spurn us the day after."

This is the common sentiment of this desperado class, and is often repeated in language almost identical with this. With these bitter things in their hearts and on their tongues, they take their position and movement in politics, assuming the pow-

er abandoned to them by those whose injury and humiliation they seek. In their war on what is sometimes regarded as the patrician order, they are joined and often led by many who, like the betrayers of liberty in Rome, descend from their originally higher associations to obtain power by pandering to the prejudices of the ignorant, base and vicious. The very language which Publius Clodius, and Julius Cæsar, and Marcus Antonius addressed to the populace of Rome, and the artful appeals to envy and prejudice, by which they defeated CICERO, CATO, BRUTUS and CASSIUS, are here faithfully translated day after day, and repeated year after year—with the same effect,—by those who, in republican America renew the woful experience of republican Rome, and with literal exactness represent the purposes of those who then and thus secured, at the same instant, the triumph and the death of democracy, converting the people's power to the people's ruin. This striking analogy is not confined to the leaders of these movements, their arts of deceit, their language, and their purposes. THE MATERIALS, THE INSTRUMENTS with which the American Clodii work are identical in character and origin with those possessed by their Roman prototypes, who, in the name of "the largest liberty to all men," and with the pretense of "enlarging the area of freedom" by conquest and fraud, enslaved the people, cheated them of their liberties, and deluged half the world with innocent blood.

The Rome which Julius Cæsar ruled numbered not within its walls more human beings than are found on the shores of the great estuaries which surround the Rome of the New World. It had not a tithe of the wealth of New York, even when enriched by the spoils of the conquered Orient. Had the immense intellect and enterprise which have here concentred their mighty energies in the peaceful pursuits of commerce, trade, and useful art, but been directed by other influences in the path of war, by this time the Atlantic republic might have ruled by the sword, that half of the world which it now pervades with its traffic, its inventions in art, its moral influences, and its Christian charities. To the characteristics of its origin does it owe the difference of its destiny. The song of the angels when they descended to announce to man the advent of God incarnate, at the period of the census of the Roman empire in the acme of the second imperial Cæsar's triumphant power, was "Peace on earth, good will to men." However imperfectly embodied here the spirit of that revelation, no man can reasonably doubt that its influences have been felt, not only in the foundation of the American commonwealth, but in the general direction of the wonderful power which it has here developed in the enterprises of peace. Yet, as has already been shown, the vices of peace have grown and flourished in this nominally Christian community, with a luxuriance equaling, probably surpassing, the vilest forms of depravity under the full influences of ancient heathenism. In the disregard of human life, and the insecurity of the rights of property, in the contempt of a solemn oath, in falsehood, deceit, and hypocrisy, and in numerous other immoralities, republican heathen Rome never gave examples of so abominable a character as New York. The dissolute classes with whom Catiline, Clodius and Antony associated, and whose support they secured in their political movements, in their conspiracies and riots, are reproduced with aggravated characteristics, in the dens of vice and crime which are found throughout this and several other American cities. The vivid pictures of those licentious and dangerous portions of the population of Rome and of their haunts, which are given by Sallust and Cicero, will strongly impress the considerate American reader with the sense of the dangers of like effects from like causes here.

THE MODE AND MEANS of the political action of these connected orders of crime in New York City, remain to be detailed. The present law of the State of New York regulating elections furnishes the basis and directs the manner of fraud. In 1840, the Legislature passed an Act relating to the Elections and the Elective Franchise, limited in operation to this city alone, by which the annual State Election in November was confined to one day, instead of three, and the various Wards were divided into election-districts, each containing not more than five hundred voters,—all being registered as qualified citizens at a specified period before each election. The public registration of electors in such small sections, furnished seeming safeguards against fraud, by giving opportunity and time for a rigid investigation of the legality of every vote by all political parties. The reduction of the time from three days to one, served under the registry also to diminish

greatly the facilities for illegal voting. The actual registration was, however, the vital characteristic of the law, and was essential to the purity of the ballot. Without it, the multiplication of the places of voting could only increase the means and opportunities of fraud. In 1842, the registration was abolished by act of Legislature; but the provision creating small election-districts was retained, or re-enacted, and subsequently extended to the whole State. The one-day clause was also continued and made general; but this, while in one respect it seemed to hinder fraud by preventing the transfer of illegal voters from one section to another at great distance, did, on the other hand, withdraw many checks by inducing the suspension of all inquiry into such crimes except on a single day. It is a well-known fact, that no party organization can maintain any vigilance, or make any successful inquisition into election-frauds, for the mere purpose of vengeance or of asserting the law. The moment the polls are closed, attention is totally absorbed in curiosity as to the result; and when that is known, all interest in politics ceases. The victorious party do not care for the frauds which their adversaries have committed unsuccessfully against them; and the defeated cannot be rallied to an inquiry so difficult and disagreeable. If the election continued three days, vigilance would be maintained everywhere to the last. Nearly all the lawful votes would be deposited on the first day, which would of course keep the whole force of each party in the field, active and watchful. During the remainder of the time, when non-residents would naturally make their attempts at repeated voting, every effort would be made to impress them with a sense of the danger, by arrests and imprisonments, a few instances of which at the beginning would be enough to deter all volunteer cheating. The anxiety and interest prevailing to the final close of the polls would secure an unintermitted watchfulness which could not be frustrated except by violence and riot. Without a registration of voters, therefore, it would be better to allow three days for every important election, and to have the balloting-places as few and as distant from each other as possible.

Thus, when the registration was abolished, the multiplied election districts were retained. Why? The answer will be easily furnished from the statements following. But upon the very face of these modifications of originally honest legislation, is evident the fact that they made the facilities of fraud boundless, and gave to perjury perfect impunity, by rendering detection impossible.

The First division of the various forms of fraud, requiring notice in this memorial, is what may be denominated the irregular, spontaneous illegal voting. always occurring among the vicious, corrupt, and reckless of every party, and sometimes done by thoughtless men, ignorant of the moral character of the offense, and unacquainted with the penalty affixed by the statute which punishes not only the successful act, but even the *attempt* to deposit an unauthorized ballot. In this way, young men less than twenty-one years of age are often induced to offer their votes. Foreigners not yet naturalized, after having merely received a certificate that they have registered notice of their intention to become citizens at the end of five years, are frequently assured by individuals that they have already acquired a right to vote, and are brought up to the polls, informed on the highest legal authority, that they cannot be compelled to produce their naturalization papers, but may, without showing them, demand the oath of citizenship, and thus are made to commit unintentional perjury. Many American citizens who have not yet acquired a legal residence in the State (one year) or in the County (six months) in times of high excitement, are so far carried away from the recollection of the law and of moral principle, as to vote, either with or without urging—sometimes under oath, but generally only when they pass unsuspected and unchallenged. Legal voters, also who have deposited their ballots at the proper place, and are afterwards wandering about at random, from one district to another, sometimes will, of their own unaided suggestion, offer their votes at various polls, and if successful, either with or without the oath, will consider the act as a mere joke, a smart thing of no heinously wicked character, and not perilous as to legal penalties. In all these forms of unadvised fraud, the recklessness and moral obtuseness created by the free use of intoxicating liquors at the time, is frequently an incitement and cause extensively mischievous.

These, and other varieties of illegal voting are such as arise simply from

individual impulse and action, without system, direction, instruction or pecuniary motive, and without the aid and security of any combination to prevent detection or punishment. They are, therefore, to be carefully distinguished from those which are the product of associated action, preconcerted arrangement, general plan, and partisan organization. They are practiced almost everywhere, but even in the City are quite insignificant in amount, and seldom effect any change in the grand result. Here they probably seldom exceed a few hundreds or a thousand, including all parties. They are also easily prevented by care, determination, and fidelity in the inspectors and challengers. Though of itself an evil of abstract importance, and giving painful evidence of corruption and want of principle, requiring remedy, yet these voluntary un-systematic frauds vanish from deliberate notice when presented by the side of the stupendous system of crime elsewhere displayed.

THE SECOND division of frauds on the ballot includes the whole scheme of unlawful action on the elective power, by party organization or by general direction or plan of any description. In this portion of the subject, however, occurs an essential distinction, and a classification, practical in its character, historical in designation. This is—the distinction between the OLD PLAN and the NEW PLAN of fraud—which are the terms familiarly applied to them in the secret councils of their authors and agents.

THE OLD PLAN consists of a variety of measures regularly put in operation at every important election before the passage of the Registry law—checked and partially suspended during the brief continuance of that Act, and resumed with great extensions, upon its repeal. Many of the contrivances are of very early origin and long-tried experiment, the date of their invention indeed being at this period a matter of merely traditional knowledge, having come down from "a time to which the memory of" politicians "runneth not contrary."

The *first* measure adopted under this plan is to bring to the polls every man in the city at the time, who can be induced to vote their ticket, without possessing the legal qualifications of residence, citizenship, age, &c. All the legal voters of that party invariably present themselves with their ballots on election-day, without any necessity for effort to bring out their legitimate force. The *second* is to bring in persons from other counties and States, for the express purpose of giving illegal votes at a particular election, returning to their own homes immediately afterwards. The *third* is the fraudulent naturalization of foreigners under the instigation and management of a regularly constituted Committee or Association of the party, by whose contrivance many foreigners, ignorant of the requirements of the law and sometimes even of the language of the country, are brought into the courts and are made to testify and swear—they know not what, in a great number of instances—all fees and charges being paid by those who direct the fraud. To bring to the polls all who can be induced to vote under oath upon a mere certificate of having given notice of intention to be naturalized at the future completion of the legal five years' residence, is another form of this measure. The *fourth* measure is to procure and hire persons to go from one election-district to another and deposit their illegal ballots as many times as possible in the course of the day, "swearing them in" whenever challenged. The great number of voting-places established in the city under the new law, (SEVENTY-NINE in all,) has rendered totally unnecessary an expedient used when there was but one in each Ward, (amounting to only SEVENTEEN in the whole city,) when systematic disguises were adopted and men were sedulously trained to assume with a variety of dresses, a corresponding change of look, voice, action, walk and manner to enable them to vote many different times in one day at the same place, without risk of detection or suspicion. The retention of the increased number of the election districts, when the vital clauses of the Registry law were repealed, was therefore a great saving of expense, labor and care on the part of those who managed this business. Disguises are still sometimes assumed, but generally rather from taste than from any necessity of avoiding risk.

These measures, it will be observed, were all directed to the increase of the vote of the party directing them. Another important measure productive often of very great effect on the result, was the diminution of the vote of the opposing party by various means. Whenever they had the power of locating the polls, they studiously placed them, in every possible instance, in the most disagreeable and

inaccessible situations, where the vicinity furnished the greatest facilities for riot and disturbance, and for creating annoyances which were likely to disgust the more respectable or aged voters so far as to keep many of them away from the ballot-boxes. Organized bands of notorious ruffians and pugilists were also, in many districts, employed by them to obstruct the polls, to create tumults, to alarm the timid and bully the peaceable, and often to molest, insult and assault unoffending voters of opposite sentiments. By these and many other annoyances, many hundreds of lawful votes were often kept out of the ballot-boxes.

By all these agencies of fraud, imposition and violence, an enormous difference in the vote was uniformly created; and in the great majority of instances, this was done with success, through a long course of years, completely reversing the veritable decision of the people at many elections, and rendering futile and null the whole principle of the republican system,—the actual majority being subjugated and governed by a minority composed of the most ignorant, vicious and desperate portion of society, constituting the basest tyranny ever known to the civilized world. The registry law, though presenting many obstacles to the successful and easy operation of this system of iniquity, still was far from an absolute prevention of the evil. THAT LAW COULD NOT EXECUTE ITSELF. It only created the means and the necessity of action against fraud—action not merely on the part of the authorized agents of the law, but also on the part of good citizens generally. Without the continual exercise of determined vigilance and energy by hundreds of active, experienced politicians, the register of electors was continually liable to be loaded with thousands of spurious names, and with those of obscure non-residents who could crowd their pretended places of abode in the populous filthy sections of the city on the eve of an election, and disappear as soon as their appointed work was done. There was hardly one variety of fraud that could not still be freely perpetrated under that law, unless the most rigid inspection and purgation of the list was constantly secured by organized action. It was but an accession to the preëxisting resources of the voluntary system of prevention. This was often neglected during the existence of the registration. The stringent arrangements for watching and guarding the polls which should have been still enforced, were relaxed; and the old system of fraud, acquiring new and ingenious modifications by the exercise of invention to evade the statute, was enlarged and strengthened in consequence.

Of all these statements, a most intelligible proof, a vivid illustration and a practical exemplification can be summarily exhibited, by a reference to the statistics of the second Charter Election which was held here after the repeal of the Registry Law.

In April, 1843, the annual contest for the local government of the City of New York was renewed, with no more than ordinary interest and activity. The party then in possession of the actual power of the Corporation, though not of the Mayoralty, presented as their candidate for the chief office, "a man of the people," an intelligent, well-informed, upright, prosperous mechanic, then representing the city in the State legislature, and previously nominated by his party for high and responsible offices, to several of which he had been elected. The mechanical class, or a portion of them, made a special effort to elect him, as a representative of their peculiar political claims and interests. The opposing candidate, at that time the incumbent, had the unanimous support of his own party, and was also favored by many who were wholly indifferent to politics, and by a few actually pretending to be of the other party, on the ground of supposed qualification as a vigorous and vigilant magistrate; though he was a specially odious and obnoxious politician, a most unscrupulous and desperate partisan, recklessly abusing power and perverting justice for factious ends, and neglecting duty when the enforcement of the law would have secured the just protection of those whose rights were above all party claims.

Between these two candidates and those severally associated with them, the contest might have been a close one, if limited to the lawful votes of those who came to the polls. The abandonment of duty by a large portion of one party, from dissatisfaction with their position in national politics, and the open desertion of another portion to the enemy, was partly compensated by the rally of the mechanical orders around their own peculiar accepted candidate. But the variation of losses and gains left both parties unusually near an equipoise. Not sufficiently informed as to the effect and

extent of certain feelings between various classes and employments, suddenly invoked from a quarter whence such calls were unusual, the party of organized fraud brought all their resources of crime to bear on that contest, and with results startling and even appalling to the most hardened among their experienced directors of imposition. The repeal of the Registry Law, retaining the multiplication of election districts (79 instead of 17) had given facility to long smothered devices of knavery, and security to new forms of crime, beyond the conception of many who had grown old and respectable in these violations of the laws of God and man. The sudden removal of all obstacles to fraud had given it an impulse which the masters of that art had not calculated. Imposture and perjury acquired in a few hours an impetus which, unchecked by the pretense of opposition, could not be restrained or moderated even by friendly interference.

The plans of those who ordered the movements of the party on that horrid day, were undoubtedly limited to the expected exigency. The entire force of their opponents might be reasonably estimated (after all subtractions for national and local schisms,) at about 20,000. In this case, mere success, not ostentation of supposed force, was the object; and a majority of 1,000 was considered sufficient for all practical purposes, if so distributed among the several Wards as to secure the command of both Board of the Common Council. Surplus majorities are no part of their policy. The expense is a matter of some consideration; and a small majority is wisely deemed better in general than one which arouses suspicion and public denunciation of fraud.

In this particular case, the result outran these prudential considerations, partly from an over-estimate of the opposing force, and partly from the ease and security with which the subordinate agents found themselves gliding along in their movements of fraud. Few or no obstacles were presented. Challengers were few, or unfaithful and negligent, or were overawed and silenced by displays of violence. In the fifth district of the Sixteenth Ward, and in the second district of the Twelfth Ward, organized and paid bands of rioters, made brutal and bloody assaults upon peaceable voters, and afterwards upon the police when they attempted to preserve order. Many unoffending persons were seriously wounded, and two almost murdered. The Common Council, discrediting warnings previously given, had made no efficient provision for maintaining the peace of the city and preventing fraud. The result was an apparent majority of 6,000, obtained by these means—including more than 7,000 deliberate false oaths. The darkest day that ever dawned on Gomorrah never closed over so much heaven-daring crime against God and man, as made up the dread account of this Christian city within those few hours.

The fact was conceded by those who committed it—by a few with boasting,—by some with jesting, but by many with confessed alarm. There was no triumph—no shouting for the victory—no parade of trophies. The processions, ensigns, peals of ordnance, with which that party were invariably wont to announce their sense of their success, were omitted in silence. A subdued and fearful tone pervaded all the organs of the victors; and the wrath of the vanquished was deprecated as though the power of reversing the result were yet theirs. A public investigation and exposure would have justified a revolution in defense of the rights of the electoral body against a minority coming into power by means so subversive of republican government. Individual inquiry was made, and facts were ascertained, exceeding previous suspicion. Apathy, jealousy, and viler motives prevented the coöperation necessary to complete success. The whole mass of the beaten party returned to their usual indifference to politics, in a few hours after the result of the election was announced—caring nothing for the particulars of the mode in which their defeat was effected. But there were a faithful, watchful few, who shuddered at the products of their search into those causes and means—whose foreboding hearts felt in those discoveries the awful portents of similar results in another and more eventful strife, when the destiny of the nation, the age, the world, should depend on the ballot of this one city. Unaided, derided, and abandoned by those who had the knowledge of the crime and the power of detecting it—unable to sympathize with the guilty indifference and contempt which thus abetted the treason, they could only reserve and store the facts obtained, for the prevention of the same outrages in coming contests, momentous and universal in interest.

The republican of the ages of classic heathenism, in horror of such crimes against that universal sanction of human testimony and law, the solemn adjuration of the powers invisible and eternal, perverted by hideous conspiracy to the destruction of the sacred safeguards of liberty and justice, would have imprecated on the perjured betrayers of his country, the wrath of its tutelar deities, and would, by the sable offering and mystic rite, have evoked the INFERNAL JOVE, stern avenger of violated oaths, with the merciless Eumenides, and all the Stygian train. The Christian freeman, helplessly beholding the dreadful prodigies of modern crime, could but stand still, and wait in faith to see the judgments of the people's Eternal King and Divine Protector, who "will not hold him guiltless THAT TAKETH HIS NAME IN VAIN;" commending the perjurers and their silent, indolent, indifferent abettors —alike and together, to the slow but certain justice of GOD THE AVENGER.

THE GREAT POLITICAL CONTEST OF 1844 was preluded by a series of minor circumstances, local in their origin and character, which gave direction, form and effect to the criminal agencies called into action through that momentous strife. However novel the inventions of fraud, however unexpected the new national questions finally presented, however sudden the changes of candidates and of the relative positions of parties, the incidents which controlled the great event were all antecedent to 1844. The great battle was lost and won, beyond retrieval, in 1842 and 1843. These local preliminary facts, therefore, have an import essential to a correct deduction of the effects from their proper causes.

The autumnal election of 1843, in New York, first developed one of these essential facts. The success which was secured by wholesale fraud and perjury in the spring, brought with it varied and conflicting obligations. In the dominant party, two mutually hostile elements had been for a long time struggling into separate existence. It was ever the policy, and often the successful agency of that party, to array against each other the various classes of the community,—to excite and wage a "social war" between portions of the people distinguished from each other by occupation, property, position and rank, interest, religious opinion or place of birth. At one time, it was—the supposed natural and universal hostility of laborers against their employers, and the professional and educated classes; at another time, it was—the imagined antipathy of mechanics and all other classes against the merchants and bankers; at another time, it was—of the debtors against the creditors, the borrowers against the lenders; at another time, it was—of the stock-jobbers and capitalists against the speculative and enterprising; at another time, it was—of the successful and prosperous men of business against the unfortunate and the bankrupts; at another time, it was—the merchants, and especially the importers, against the mechanics and manufacturers; but, very uniformly, their great cry was—"the poor against the rich;" and it was always —the Romish sectarian against the Protestant, and the foreign-born against the native of a republican country.

Feeding thus the morbid and ravenous appetites of the basest and most malevolent, with mere clamors and with empty denunciations varying in note with every breeze, they had gradually, insensibly aroused among themselves a spirit of intolerance and animosity between classes, which finally became as perilous to the harmony and success of the party, as it had been to the peace and good order of the community. The mass of naturaliz-

ed voters were for a long time studiously trained to habits of disorder and insolence in their political action, and were continually taught to regard the peaceable portion of the community and the party associated with them, and the majority of native citizens, as their natural enemies, hostile to their continued enjoyment of equal political privileges and jealous of their intrusion. Assurances were multiplied to them that the party with which they generally acted contained their only friends; and that their only security for the maintenance of their rights, was the ascendency of that party. The strong religious sympathies and antipathies of those who were of the Romish sect were continually played upon; and the great portion of the Protestants, particularly of the more cultivated evangelical order, who predominated in the opposing party, were charged with desiring and designing to deprive Papists of their due share of the advantages of the public systems of education, and to convert the legislation of the State and the distribution of its bounties, to the dissemination of religious opinions hostile to the faith of Rome, among children in the public schools.

The Papists, thus excited, became clamorous for new privileges and safeguards, which they finally extorted from their reluctant guardians, who never intended to put themselves to this trouble for them, or to do more than keep awake their hostility to the other party, and retain the great mass of naturalized citizens in support of their own schemes for obtaining and retaining political power. The services of their "adopted" friends, at the polls, in public meetings and in riots, were paid only with fine speeches, professions of peculiar affection and admiration for "foreigners," and innumerable declamations against "the moneyed aristocracy," as the natural and deadly foes of the democracy and the hard-fisted working-men. Of the "spoils of victory" won by their labors, they seldom received even a pittance. From office they were almost uniformly excluded by those of American birth, who used them but as tools and stepping-stones for their personal advantage. Year after year, the accession of the peculiar friends of the "foreigners" to power brought but this result in spite of the dissatisfaction consequently accumulating.

The time came at last, when this unequal management of patronage could be endured no longer. Emboldened by their success in obtaining special legislation for sectarian purposes, through their rebellious dictation in 1841, they took occasion, on the eve of the Charter Election of 1843, to threaten another schism and a separate organization, by which their previous political associates would be inevitably overthrown, and the party usually in apparent minority, placed in power almost without occasion for effort. Their *ultimatum* to the chief candidates and responsible organizations of the party was — the demand of an unequivocal promise of "a fair division of the spoils" with the largest number of offices given to the naturalized citizens, who for some years had given more than half and sometimes nearly two-thirds of the lawful votes of that party. They claimed, with very little exaggeration, a force of not less than 10,000 voters of foreign nativity, entitled by every republican usage and rule to more than half the emoluments of the government; and as they were confessedly deficient in qualified candidates for their due proportion of the more honorable and higher-salaried offices, this was to be compensated by yielding to them a still larger number of appointments lower in rank and pay.

These claims, enforced by threats which they had less than two years before shown to be of serious significance, were, of necessity, recognized by the powers that were to be; and secret assurances were given to the claimants, that they should no longer be wronged of their share of the pecuniary benefits of success, and that they should have a full and fair apportionment of offices and employments. This contract was fulfilled in good faith by the dominant party, immediately after their accession to power. A violation or imperfect performance of it would have exposed them to certain overthrow, and political death from the vengeance of their naturalized friends. When the usual sweeping removal of all the incumbents took place, hundreds of appointments which were demanded and expected, as a matter of course, by faithful partisans of American birth, were conferred upon persons of foreign origin and accent, odious to the great mass of their political associates, and despised by them for their brutality, ignorance, and their enslavement to an obnoxious religion. Watchmen, lamp-lighters, street-sweepers, bell-ringers, dock-masters, &c., &c., &c., were found almost exclusively among a class who had before been accounted by

regularly established "old line" of office-holders, as but "the dogs under the table, that eat of the children's crumbs." The good old rule of distribution, time-hallowed and precious, had been "Let the children be first filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to the dogs."

The disappointment, disgust and wrath caused by this new arrangement of the policy of patronage, broke forth instantaneously with a power not before appreciated—a vindictive passion not anticipated—by those who had known these agents of political corruption but as the servants of party, and who had seen their fidelity only when hired and paid, and had heedlessly mistaken them for *slaves*, working in bondage, like the mass, in the chains of prejudice and envious stupidity—without fee or reward other than the gratification of beholding the mortification, injury and abasement of those who ranked above them in society. They mis-counted the weight of these base influences. These, however mighty, could not outweigh the sense of new wrong inflicted by those under whose direction they had sacrificed all—honesty, conscience, self-respect, reputation, the good opinion of respectable and independent freemen. The outburst of the fury thus excited, overbore for a time all the barriers of party despotism, and rent the bonds of foreign thraldom to an extent not easily to be repaired. The new movement became a flood which rose to a hight "unknown within the memory of the oldest inhabitant" of the sinks of political crime and slavery. The "high-water mark" of factious rebellion was completely transcended and obliterated.

The discontent and disaffection thus generated delayed not its manifestations to the ordinary period of partisan action. Within six weeks after the action of the newly installed municipal government of the city, the incipient action was taken. At midsummer, a new political body was complete in its existence and organization. For the first time in the history of American politics, a THIRD PARTY was actually formed, capable of sustaining itself in being, after innumerable similar efforts in previous years had only brought their parentage into deserved ridicule, from the despicable character of the insignificant, lifeless abortions which had been thus produced. Through the summer and autumn of 1843, the work of formation was carried on by vigorous hands. The character and source of the movement can be sufficiently distinguished by the date of its origin. The defeated party was, by nature and habit, incapable of an effort to rally immediately after such a stunning defeat, however caused. For any election of secondary importance, they could never organize until the last moment. Throughout that season, both the mass and the leaders of that party remained in complete inaction and indifference. Their ordinary movement began in the usual manner, at the usual time, within two months of the election. Of the new party, they knew nothing; and the great majority totally discredited the reports of its progress and strength. They generally regarded it as a mere trick of the old enemy to divide them, and when assured that it would poll from 7,000 to 10,000 votes in the fall, declared it impossible that it could give over 2,000, and hardly probable that it would amount to more than 1,000. The meetings of the new party were kept up with great animation, and displayed a force derived almost exclusively from the ranks of the party which had triumphed at the Charter Election. Their most prominent leaders were persons recently conspicuous as the worst and most malignant enemies of the party previously in possession of the city government—suddenly turned into hostility to their former associates by the manner in which the patronage of the Corporation had been exercised to their exclusion. Disappointed office-seekers were the nucleus of the organization, and the directors of its policy. They availed themselves of the sectarian rancor of large portions of their old party, revived religious feuds, and successfully appealed to the envy with which the lowest order of native laborers and shop-keepers regarded the cheap competition of those who from their foreign birth and servile breeding, were capable of existing at much smaller expense than those of republican origin.

The outcries of bigotry and intolerance, before unknown to republican America, were borrowed from the political vocabularies of the Old World, which has not yet learned to exclude from the affairs of the COMMONWEALTH, those questions which pertain only to the CHURCH,—which continually degrades religion by forcing its interests into contact with the selfish purposes of unprincipled office-seekers and office-holders, and ever seeks to make those things subjects of legislation that are truly only matters of opin-

ion and moral suasion. "MISCERE HUMANA DIVINAQUE"—"to mingle human things with divine"—was an outrage upon the conscience and judgment of man unenlightened by revelation, revolting to the moral sense of even the Roman of that corrupt age which is blackened in the memory and records of the human race by the betrayal and death of classic democracy. To American republicanism, had hitherto been given the peculiar honor of marking and maintaining this vital distinction, by the obliteration of which for 2000 years, man's terrors of the retributions of the next world had been made the means of his degradation, ruin, and enslavement in this. The new party was a *foreign* party, in every lineament of its physiognomy, and in every circumstance of its origin. While it usurped and blasphemed the name of "American" and "republican," it derived its principles and policy from brutal British bigotry and the bloody lawlessness of Swiss and German revolutionary radicalism. Its incipient movements were aided by the presence of foreigners, who thronged its assemblies at all times, furnishing the watch-words of the new faction, and giving the key-note of its anthems, the responses of its blasphemous orgies, from the exploded formularies of disbanded Orange lodges and of outcast European fanaticism. Learning from such teachers the mode of associating religious jealousies with political advantage, the *native* grog-shop-keepers, rooted out of their richest wallowing-places by the competition of German Schlossen, Zum-what-not-Stadten, and Bier-Hausen, Gast-Hausen, &c., innumerable, of jaw-dislocating and throat-rasping roughness of designation, rushed into the movement for the exclusion of foreigners from all offices of trust and profit, including that most responsible privilege of dealing out liquors at three cents a glass under the authority and appointment of the State. Thus met in new war the before harmonious elements of bigotry and vice from both divisions of the world, while, over all, the cold-blooded, calculating spirit of democratic American office-seeking fraud presided as the inciting and directing cause, and made the Bible the stepping-stone and footstool of political power.

The most ignorant and proverbially fanatical Protestant sects, (a large majority of whom are always associated with the political party which panders to envious vulgarity,) joined, almost *en masse*, in the foreign war-cry of "No Popery"—a sound novel to American ears. They were soon joined by others, connected with them in but few points of religious association, and sympathetic only in hatred of a common enemy, not in Christian "love of one another."

The result of this attempted "consort of Christ with Belial" was, that in the autumnal election of 1843, with 5000 votes drawn from the ranks of the party of corruption, were given 3800 from their old opponents. The ordinary agencies of "the old plan" of fraud were freely employed; and "the regular ticket" of the corruptionists received a little less than 15,000 votes, on an average, while the ballots of the faithful, law-abiding portion of the community amounted to a little more than 14,000. The loss of 5000 votes to one party was more easily repaired to it than that of 3800 to the other. The first had but to extend its system of fraud; the second, repelling the thought of such agencies, had no remedy or preventive of evil but vainly to present the unity of its cause—the necessity of the exclusion of all local, temporary, extraneous issues, on the eve of a great national contest.

The Charter Election of the spring of 1844, the very year of national destiny, opened under these auspices. The two old parties organized and acted as usual. That which had the lawful majority could but present to its usual supporters the plain fact, that the retention of their full force at the previous autumnal election would have given them every office, besides the moral effect of a plurality in the city, with the evidence of a division in the ranks of their opponents. But such representations were made to those who were worse than deaf and blind—to many who were ready at any time to sell their votes to whatever party would raise the value of any property then in their hands—State stocks, real estate, or anything else—men who were ever ready to betray their country's interests for their own temporary gain. Yet, surprising as it may seem, each one of these men would have considered himself insulted by an offer to betray any other moral obligation for money—as, for instance, to sell the honor of his wife, the liberty of his child—but only because, in so doing, he would destroy his domestic peace, and mar his selfish gold-bought comforts.

Thus was the preliminary contest of that eventful year heralded. Ten thousand true voters were pledged to abide by their principles, even to the rising of the sun on the election day. Fifteen thousand were equally resolved to give their ballots to the new party's candidates. The gamblers and speculators in elections had noted these movements, changes, and pledges, with a wary eye. Twenty thousand votes would be more than enough to secure victory to the ordinary agencies of fraud, in this position of matters. Trusting to the political honor of those whom no wise man will ever again entrust with his personal interests, hopes, or fame, they staked their money freely and boldly, and lost it as freely. Between the rising and the setting sun of that day, 5000 votes were changed, which reversed the destiny not merely of that day, but of the age.

Not a gambler or a cheat that lost his money on that issue but rose the day after both "a sadder and a wiser man." Barclay Street and Park Row were half-beggared by the result. Yet, when in a politico-religious controversy, the Five Points and Corlaer's Hook were, for the first time, arrayed against each other, what speculator in politics could safely judge? Who could have known, except by examining both sections on Dens's Theology and the Assembly's Catechism, that one was Popish and the other vehemently Protestant?—when "democracy" was divided against itself—this part declaring that they would be damned if they would have the Bible in the schools, and that part swearing that they would be damned if they wouldn't.

The history of that folly is already written, closed and sealed. Few will care to remember that the party which thus originated, expired at last in a sort of collapsed stage of a moral spasmodic cholera, having so exhausted itself with repeated vomitings forth of the undigested abominations which it had too hastily swallowed, that it was finally destroyed by strangling with an ineffectual convulsive effort to disgorge the nauseous remainder.

The gamblers, and the leaders, and candidates of the ejected party were rendered desperate by the result; but when they are desperate they are dangerous; for "desperate men do desperate things." Few of them had ever seen darker hours for their political prospects or their pecuniary hopes. They saw around them a divided party, defeated by division. They saw its all-destructive energies, baffled without, (notwithstanding the aid of treachery which they had encouraged in gibbering folly,) grown SELF-destructive,—scorpion-like, turning its venomous and deadly sting upon its own vitals. They saw arrayed against them in brighter hope and more united force than ever before, even when on the eve of unparalleled victory, the millions of a host invincible by any honest and legal means—mighty not only by the power of democratic numbers, the prosperous harmony of all orders and occupations under beneficent protective legislation, and the nobly vindictive courage of patriotic spirit conscious of real strength to assert and completely execute a just popular judgment checked in its incipient performance only by mercenary knavery and corruption,—but above all, exulting in the long-deferred opportunity to render justice and honor to the man of their enthusiastic admiring choice, deriving new strength and confidence in their renewed labors, from his towering greatness and pure renown. The whole party throughout the nation was united in singleness and community of purpose, in principle and policy, as perfectly as in the selection of their great representative.

These views and impressions of the prospects of parties were not confined to the defeated section in this city, but pervaded the minds of its leaders and guides in every portion of the country, but especially at the seat of the General Government. From the summer of the year 1843, the portents of their downfall and lasting exclusion from power had been multiplying; and every new movement continued to distract and weaken them while it increased popular confidence in the fortunes of their powerful foes.

The certain existence of a rapidly increasing majority of the States and people against them, was known and considered in their secret councils from the highest to the lowest place. Contemplating the threatened defeat as the complete annihilation of their party and the ruin of all their schemes of personal ambition, the oldest and greatest of that formidable league of corrupt, unprincipled and desperate politicians did not for a moment hesitate to seek the invention and employment of unlawful, wicked means, by which the constitutional majority of the people could be overwhelmed and the

public judgment be falsely declared from the polls. No man knowing the character of those men whose political fortunes and personal interests were thus depending on the result can believe them incapable of any enormity of fraud and corruption which they might deem necessary to save their party from destruction and themselves from powerless obscurity. They had all been trained and habituated for years to falsehood and the most wanton disregard of the principles of morality and honor in their relations to the public. The accomplishment of a political object, the success of a party, is always considered by such men as a purpose so good in itself as to justify all means necessary to that end, or at any rate to make crime a matter of indifference or trifling moral importance.

At an early period in the year 1844, the fact of a deficiency of votes in a majority of the States for the candidates of that party (whoever might be nominated) was communicated among the responsible leaders and managers all over the country; and the sense of the necessity of supplying that deficiency by fraud was simultaneously impressed on all, while the publications and organs of the party in every quarter studiously maintained a stout show of confidence in a certain victory by the lawful suffrages of the people. The directors and agents being duly possessed of this fact, took care to obtain first a just and veritable estimate of the actual numbers of the lawful voters of their own party, and of those opposed to them. After doing this was assigned to the same partisan agents, or still more trustworthy and respectable men selected as their representatives, the mighty task of creating in all the various practicable sections and counties a fictitious equivalent to the small lawful majority of voters positively known to exist against them in each. This measure, or system of measures was, through safe and determined men, put in operation in every part of the United States throughout the year 1844. Before the 4th of March in that year, the plan was completed, and was in incipient operation from the extreme northeast to the remotest southwest. The direction was central. The apparent origin of the scheme was in the National Capital; but there were some in the great original seat of fraud, who knew from what source the primary suggestions of the scheme had proceeded, who could trace in the history of New York legislation and in the character of a peculiar portion of a New York population, the composition of details suited especially to previous political emergencies in this great school and scene of political crime.

The associated gamblers and criminals of the city of New York had for many years maintained a peculiar connexion with the cognate fraternity of political adventurers and speculators who formed the nucleus and directive agency of "the party" here. Distinct in organization, though often possessing some members in common, these two sub-communities of knavery had subsisted, each in its own sphere, but in a sympathetic contact, productive of reciprocal profit incalculably great, and consequently accumulating durability by duration.

The gamblers had long been in the habit of paying to the responsible agents of the party with which they were thus associated, a large sum of money just before each election, as a consideration for secret political intelligence upon which they could make their betting calculations, and also as a means of bringing about the purposed effects which constituted the certain details of success. The authorized General Committee of the party made an exact, thorough canvass of the actual lawful vote of the city just before each election, and, upon that, decided how many spurious votes were wanted to secure practical results, and *where* they were wanted and could be desirably bestowed. They could announce to their secret allies, with great precision, the real majorities against them; and then they arranged with them, in like precision, the exact apparent majorities in every ward or district, which were to be produced by their joint means and agencies in the manufacture of false votes. The sum raised by the gamblers, and contributed to the party treasury as their equivalent for secret intelligence, was $3000 in the spring of 1844, and did not much vary from that amount for some time previous. This both paid the expenses of the laborious preliminary canvass, and furnished means for making good its deficiencies by illegal ballots. The gamblers could also furnish the instruments and agents or fraud from among their retainers and dependents. All the powerful influences of the lawless and criminal class of the community were within their reach. The consciousness of a common character and purpose,

connecting them securely with those who avowedly lived by statute-breaking villany, was a tie of irresistible, mutually attractive force, which enabled them to communicate always with perfect confidence and safety. They could therefore, at the briefest notice, call out an auxiliary legion as prompt to execute the measures of fraud as their patrons were ingenious to design, invent or direct.

With the information thus distinctly furnished, the gamblers could always make the business of "betting on elections" a game of skill and certainty to themselves—a game of chance only to fools. The number of lawful votes belonging to each party in each Ward, the number of absentees, of doubtful and undecided voters, the number of illegal votes required and secured to produce the desired majorities, the amount of those majorities in every instance, with an exactness varying only by tens in a Ward, and by hundreds in the whole city—were all fixed data foreknown to the gamblers and "sporting characters" through revelations thus given. The secresy, vigilance and activity necessary to the safe and sure retention of these matters among the favored class, were easily maintained by a body of men with faculties so sharpened and disciplined by continued exercise in unlawful, dishonest pursuits. Honest men, or those habituated only to pursuit of gain by open, respectable business, would be, intellectually as well as morally, less capable of the tasks involved in such an undertaking. The secret might escape, by occasional relaxation of the needful self-restraint and caution: the needful measures would be often neglected; and the execution of deep plans would often fail by deficient arrangements, if they were left to any men but such as were occupied habitually in concealing their own gainful violations of the law of the land and of the decent usages of respectable society.

The importance and value of the business of betting on elections made it worthy of the expenditure of time, money and labor which was so freely lavished on these preparations. It opened a much wider and higher field to the operations of the craft than was furnished in the dark dens and closely-curtained saloons of the professional gamblers and their victims. Long usage and the tolerated irregularities of high political excitement had made this form of gambling nominally respectable,—a little more so than the same operations on the race-course. It was the most dignified and respectable variety of the gamester-craft, sanctioned by the public example of many of the most honorable men in society. Editors, high office-holders, merchants and others of well-established character, in both parties, encouraged it by word and action. The vice was excused, or justified, on the ground that it was necessary to offer and take wagers publicly, in order to evince, to the doubtful and wavering portion of the community, a proper confidence in the success of the party, and thus to retain many votes which are always reserved to the last, and are then given to that which appears to be the strongest side. Under these pretenses and influences, were brought within the reach of professional gamblers, many who could in no other way be induced to put themselves in the power of such persons. Thousands who would gamble in nothing else, gambled largely in politics, without shame or scruple, and eagerly rushed into this disgraceful competition with the outcasts of society, till, for some months, the whole country seemed turned into one great race-course, fancy-stock exchange, or gaming-house, where the slang of jockeys, brokers, faro-bankers and thimble-riggers was converted to the expression of political chances, displacing the decent language in which patriots and republicans were wont, in better days, to speak of the dangers of the commonwealth and the duties of the citizen. In all places of public resort, in the streets, the hotels, the oyster-shops, every political discussion was almost inevitably terminated by the tender of a wager from some of the gamblers or their agents, who were continually prowling around, and seeking to provoke or worry incautious men into "backing up their opinion with their money."

The effect on the result, designed and soon produced by such operations, was THIS. At least half a million of dollars was offered, pledged and secured to the gambling fraternity and their political coadjutors, by the professed friends of morality, order, peace and protective legislation, upon which they might draw, a few months after sight, to pay all the expenses of the election. A much larger amount than this was staked; but this sum was early secured by the professional speculators in elections; and it was for them to decide how much of this amount it was necessary to anticipate in expendi-

tures to *insure* their bets. Five hundred thousand dollars? With half the money, they could beat the strongest candidate ever presented by any party!

The knowledge of the existence of a powerful majority of the people, equivalent to a similar majority in the electoral colleges, against the party of corruption and fraud, had caused deliberate preparations on their part to nullify the popular will, in the very opening of the year 1844. At that time, their prospects were darkest; and it was amid the alarm of multiplied and accumulating defeats that their desperate resolution was taken never to be defeated for lack of votes, though they lacked voters. In the National Capital, while external dangers and internal strifes shook and rent that once formidable party almost to dissolution, was formed the most awful conspiracy against popular liberty ever known since that of Catiline. The more imminent the peril of that threatened overthrow with its consequent damnation, dreary, hopeless, irretrievable, eternal—the more energetic was the movement to avert such destruction, and the more reckless were the actors as to the moral character of the means necessary for their preservation. This, the details, in due time and place forthcoming, will show.

The spring of 1844 brought a material change of events and movements,—especially of those which centred in the commercial metropolis, by the organization of a "third party." Originally operating only to the division and injury of that corrupt party which had been in the ascendency in 1843, had been made, by treachery and folly, a means of disorganizing and weakening the other great party, which was then making preparations for the mighty contest for the recovery of the power in the nation and State, that had been meanly stolen from them after they had so nobly won it in 1840. The original nucleus of rejected office-seekers, in whose revengeful and envious covetousness the new party had its origin, might have been content to secure the overthrow of the faction from which they had seceded, by withholding their 5000 votes from their old associates, and thus allowing the just cause of the other party to succeed. But a want of unity and confidence prevented that unfortunate party from availing themselves of such an opportunity. Unable to appreciate the strength and advantage of their position, they were led to abandon it and assume all the responsibility of that malignant hostility to naturalized citizens that originated the new movement, and which was before confessedly imputable only to a revolted section of their opponents. They at once sacrificed that respectable portion of the naturalized voters whose confidence in the justice and wisdom of their policy was then strong and fast increasing, and drove them to hostile measures of self-preservation. The coalition with an unprincipled faction, on the assumption of a new and un-republican principle, was fatal to the rising energy of the great national cause.

But while many were induced to commit this folly in thoughtlessness and ignorance, there were others who in part foreknew and *purposed* the evil. There was a small body of men nominally connected with the betrayed party, insignificant in numbers and influence, odious to the great mass of their old political associates from their opposition to the Presidential candidate who had for years been justly regarded by millions as the representative and embodiment of their principles, and as the man most capable of realizing their hopes and effecting their objects. This little faction, knowing that they had nothing to hope from the man whom they had so long opposed, and so often sought to betray, beheld with small satisfaction the prospect of his election without their aid, in a manner which would render him free from all obligation to them. Few though they were, they were formidable by their great wealth, being almost the only persons in the city who were both able and willing to employ their money freely in politics; and it was their desire and policy that the party with which they were connected should be so placed as to triumph only by their assistance. As soon as the new movement attracted their attention in the autumn of 1843, they saw in it at once the means of creating a powerful independent force, and sought to make the third party a rallying point for their future operations. They joined the new faction, encouraged it by word and by pecuniary contributions, and labored vigorously to give it firmness, consistency and permanence. Their object was to wield a mass of votes which should be essential to the success of the National party with which they were formerly associated, and to elect to the State and National legislatures a separate

body of representatives who would hold the balance of power, and keep the President in check, unless he should yield to their dictation or recognize their claims. Looking still farther forward, they saw in the new party a basis for their operations on the next succeeding Presidential election, when their own favorite candidate, obnoxious to multitudes of his former associates, would be enabled to stand on his own peculiar ground, as the champion of a new cause, independent of that which he had once deserted. These purposes would have been accomplished, but for the success of the system of fraud which was put in operation for the defeat of their enterprise, as well as of the National party on whose triumph their own objects depended. Such a defeat they did not anticipate. They were so confident of the success of the great candidate, that they had imagined it safe to diminish his strength, in order to make him seem to owe his success to the votes which they claimed to control through the new party.

This fatal movement was marked by the desperate foe—so vigilant and suspicious; and they did not fail to use all means to profit by it. They immediately roused the whole mass of adopted citizens throughout the Union to a sense of their danger from the success of the new coalition. They everywhere denounced the proposed exclusion of naturalized citizens from office and from the elective franchise, and placed themselves boldly in view as the protectors of the threatened rights of that portion of the people. They thus secured to themselves, in solid mass, many tens and scores of thousands of voters totally indifferent to all other political questions in comparison with the vital interests of their own class. Thousands of educated foreigners, who were before content with a residence under the protection of equal laws, and had neglected the privilege of voting, now rushed with animated zeal into the great political struggle, in which they would otherwise have taken no part. Many others, whose strong personal admiration of the greatest man of the nation had always made them resolve to aid his election, were suddenly driven back from his support by seeing his friends associated with their avowed, malignant enemies.

Management was also used, by the same direction, to prevent any loss to their Presidential and Gubernatorial tickets from the adhesion of their dissatisfied partisans merely to the third party's nominations for Congress and the State Legislature. Very little effort was necessary. The new party avowedly left its members free to act with their previous political associates severally, in the election of the executive officers of the State and General Government; and they did so. Whatever encouragement was given by knaves to dupes in regard to any proposed "bargain," by which the third party should give its votes to the Presidential Electors of one of the two National parties in return for votes given to their candidates for Congress and the Legislature, no man of sense needed any argument to expose a cheat so palpable. There could be no bargain where but one of the parties had anything to give. Every member of the new faction was at the same time a devoted adherent of that one of the two parties with which he had previously agreed, on all points save the boasted "one idea" of exclusion of all but natives from office. There was no power in the coalition, or in any set of men, to transfer a single vote from one of the two original parties to the other; and, since the election, they have declared that fact, and gloried in it.

The action of the great National Conventions of the two parties, for the nomination of candidates for the Presidency, which took place in Baltimore in May, 1844, had in both instances a great modifying effect on the aspect of the contest. In the first case, the nomination for the Presidency had fortunately been forestalled by the action of the people themselves, and was not entrusted to the hurried decision of an accidental assembly of ill-advised political aspirants, collected but for a day or two, and subjected to the management of a few artful manœuvrers and prejudiced, envious, short-sighted intriguers. The nomination for the Vice-Presidency, notwithstanding the woful experience of the time, had been left by the party, without reserve or instruction, to be determined by an incompetent body, who, in conformity with a principle almost universal in its application, hesitating between the three prominent candidates, solved the doubt by hastily throwing their votes for another whose claims had been but for two weeks suggested, and had never been canvassed. They nominated a most eminent, patriotic, and able man, of a fame so nobly elevated, that envious malignity had despaired of reaching it with calumny, yet

of a worth so modest and unobtrusive, that jealous ambition had never been aroused among his political associates by a competition for public honors with his exalted and immaculate excellence. The honor, unsought and unexpected by him, sought *him*, and was forced upon him with a power that left him no course but calmly and conscientiously to assume and sustain the responsibility. Through all the fiery trials of that merciless contest, he passed, with a purity unscathed, untouched. The only reproach uttered against him by the most malignant and daring political enmity, was—the imputation of virtues, good works, and religious merits, by which he was "made meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light," rather than to share the earthly dominion of "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." A better or purer man, one more unimpeachable, or unapproachable by falsehood, could not be named—"his enemies themselves being judges."

But the introduction of the name of such a candidate, at that peculiar moment, so critical in the evolution of the destiny of the nation and the world, was fraught with consequences most unfortunate and mortal to the hopes and purposes of the age. Timing, as it did, with the recent organization of a new party, between the two great natural moral and political divisions of American society, which developed a professedly *religious* and sectarian element, before dormant in civil relations, it bore the seeming of an attempt to conciliate, and associate with a cause already strong enough in its moral position, a faction base in the mercenary and prejudiced motives of its origin, and soon defiled with the blood of enslaved, alarmed victims of superstition, and blackened with the smoke of burning churches, in which God, the Son of God, was devoutly, though impurely and ignorantly worshiped. It aroused, moreover, in a hundred thousand hearts, the pulsations of a long slumbering animosity to certain peculiar forms of religious benevolence, with which that pure and honored name was associated. For, this enlightened country, like all Christendom, held within it many, who though gifted by God with the full knowledge of their duties to the commonwealth and to themselves, in all their noble relations to their race and kind, as affected by the action of republican electors, of sovereign yet mutually dependent freemen, had never raised or widened their spiritual vision to the view of a Christian philanthropy, vast as the moral necessities of the world, and boundless as the interests of eternity. There were many, faithful and true to their country and their political duty, not prepared in Providence for this assumption of novel and untried responsibilities, whose warm and loyal hearts shrunk from this announcement of a name already half-forgotten in its connexion with temporal interests, and cherished only from its association with the honor of HIM whose "Kingdom is not of this world." That name added no strength to the cause of wise and righteous government, while it took much from it. Multitudes devoted to the faith of Rome, and others holding tenets not technically orthodox and evangelical, were led to forget their sense of duty to their political principles, by a new dread of promoting the triumph of what they considered heresy, bigotry and fanaticism. Though thousands were faithful, notwithstanding any or all of these deadly influences, "faithful even unto death," tens of thousands were driven from their only associations with the cause of peace, purity, justice and truth.

The melancholy moral of this movement was—that the first duty of all Christians in their political relations is to regard THE UNITY OF THE CAUSE,—to be content with giving and seeking only such votes as belong to the civil objects which they profess, and never to attempt to conciliate unpatriotic religious pretension, by offering to make such atonement for sin falsely imputed by disguised infidelity. It taught all who beheld and experienced the consequences of that wanton and vainly guileful scheme, that the basest and most wicked hypocrisy is the "homage" thus paid by virtue to vice, in comparison with which, common hypocrisy, "the homage that vice pays to virtue," is holy and honorable.

That nomination to the second office of the Federal Republic invited the repetition of every imaginable exploded calumnious device against the personal moral character of him who needed to ask no forgiveness of his country, which he had served so faithfully, however to the neglect of what every sinful man owes to his God. The professional gamblers, debauchees, cheats and murderers instantaneously broke out in accusation of a man who, had he been a thousand times worse than their lying slanders represented him, might have well denied their competency to judge him,

by saying to his profligate accusers—"Let him that is without such sin among you, cast the first stone at me." Faithful and blameless in all his personal, domestic and social relations—unstained by even an imputation of falsehood, dishonesty, deception, double-dealing or hypocrisy—famed throughout his life for scrupulous compliance with every public and private engagement, and for the careful discharge of every pecuniary obligation, either legally expressed or remotely implied—frank, sincere, generous, unsuspicious, confiding, and boldly truthful—he presented in his character a model of many virtues especially rare among Americans, and nobly worthy of imitation by the rising generation of his enthusiastic compatriots, in whose hearts he reigned with an unequaled power, founded on love, reverence and respect for his moral traits, as well as on admiration for his great intellectual endowments.

The gamblers, the speculators in fraud, the abettors of peculation and perjury, the shameless slaves of intemperance and licentiousness, the habitual cheats and liars, the extortioners, smugglers and dishonest bankrupts—all combined their means, and made pecuniary contributions to print and circulate papers and tracts on "the MORALS of Politics," in which the character of the Presidential candidate of the party opposed to them was exhibited to the religious and conscientious portion of the community, as stained with the most odious, degrading vices, blackened with revolting crimes, and flagrant outrages on decency and piety, with corruption, treachery, deceit, mercenary violation of public obligations, and with a multiplicity and variety of wickedness unparalleled in any instance on record. While under agencies thus originated and directed, the consciences of rigid moralists and Evangelical Protestants were disturbed and perplexed, the jealousy of Papists, Liberal sects, philosophical sceptics and infidels, was kindled to perfect fury by similarly studious inventions, circulated among them, as to the bigoted zeal and gloomy, exclusive Calvinism of the candidate for the Vice-Presidency. From the nomination to the Election, this double system of calumny was in operation on the prejudices of the various religious divisions of the people in every county and town in the Union. Herod and Pilate, the Pharisees and Sadducees, the hypocrite and the blasphemer, were united in the harmonious enforcement of this monstrous scheme of scurrilous abuse and sneaking detraction.

The grand plan of operations concerted before the close of 1843, and communicated in every portion of the Union, where an effort was needful and practicable, required, first, a complete and exact secret registration of the whole actual force of their own party, and of the other—with an estimate of the effect of all new causes, then in continuous operation, tending to increase or diminish either, and with due provision for the repeated correction of this account of moral agencies down to the very eve of the great election. The primary political position of each individual in the mass, as determined by his opinions, judgment, self-interest, prejudice, passion, or personal feeling, was but one item in the account—the fundamental element of the calculation. The final solution of the great problem was attained by numberless additions and subtractions of "disturbing causes." The influence of new questions (not originally partisan) as to "protection," naturalization, "annexation," was duly measured and reckoned. The operation of one-sided imputations made by themselves was also carefully weighed—of the terrors of abolition at the South, and the hatred of slavery in the North—of the abhorrence of fanaticism and hypocrisy by infidels and rationalists, and the dread of imputed immorality and licentiousness by "the most straitest sect." The effect of the attempted formation of a new "third party," and of the abortive coalition, was also counted;—all these varied agencies working for the diminution of the natural force of the party of peace, and to the increase of the party of corruption—without a single exception.

To establish and maintain, in their own party, a solid basis of action, by securing through all these influences, and others unworthy of mention, a substantial mass of genuine legal voters, was another essentially important measure of the grand plan. To fix with equal exactness the veritable vote of their opponents, was of the same necessity, and, in like manner, indispensable to the advantageous formation and successful management of the best-arranged scheme of fraud. If the cheating game were tried on both sides, there would be an end at once of all certainty in the operations of politics. Thence, the unaffected horror and alarm excited among them in 1840 by the discovery of suspicious and supposed criminal move-

ments made in 1838 by some persons connected with the opposing party in New York, in the introduction of voters from another city. If that party should cheat, and should organize a permanent effective system of frauds on the elective franchise, what would become of the party which justly claimed a monopoly of the business, and a patent-right for the machinery, on the ground of having invented and first used it? Every effort was therefore made by them, especially by those most active in fraud and most interested in its results, to prevent all danger of any renewal of such attempts by their opponents at that time or subsequently; and they succeeded in that prevention to their own entire satisfaction. They have never pretended to suspect or accuse their adversaries of these crimes since. Those upon whom they then succeeded in fixing suspicion have since been excluded not only from the confidence and favor of their own party, but from all hope of power or reward in case of its success. The term "pipe-layer" now remains on the party to which it was first applied, whose more open frauds and least criminal tricks, it was first manufactured to designate. In October, 1840, the party then in possession of the city government and corporation patronage, boldly stepped forward and took possession of the business of conducting the waters of the Croton into New York city, which was before that, in the exclusive possession of the party then commanding the patronage of the State. The construction of the aqueduct was originally under the direction of commissioners appointed by the State government, then in the hands of the party opposed to that which ruled in the city of New York. The Common Council, on the eve of the Presidential Election, assumed the power of constructing the channels through which the water should be conveyed within the bounds of the city. Large companies of foreigners were immediately employed in digging trenches for the large iron pipes which would be required, two years later, when the aqueduct and reservoirs were completed. The work was totally premature and unnecessary at the time; and the purpose of the managers of the City government, in thus introducing large bodies of foreigners from other places just before the election, was so apparent, that the workmen employed in "laying pipe" were instantly pointed out as the instruments of designed fraud; and the "pipe-layers" were continually spoken of as non-residents brought in to give illegal votes. The term was subsequently thrown back, transferred, and applied by the guilty party to their opponents, in connexion with frauds said to have been committed, two years before the term was invented, by the party which always directed every power within its means to the prevention, detection, and punishment of fraud.

The word "pipe-layer," which had acquired its infamous signification from this flagrant abuse and cheat, was perverted by the fraudulent, to the purpose of fastening opprobrium and slander upon their opponents, as a part of their scheme for deterring them from ever attempting to resist fraud by fraud. The vote on one side must always be a fixed quantity, ascertainable by a fair canvass, in order to enable the other party to introduce illegal votes with any reasonable certainty of success. This basis of calculation being secured, the problem is extremely simple and practicable. Given—the exact number of voters of one party, (for instance, 20,000,) and the exact number of the other party (for instance, 17,000,) the solution is—3,000 illegal votes, to counterbalance the majority, and 5,000, &c., or any other number additional, requisite to overcome majorities in other sections of the State.

Having surveyed the position of the two great parties and calculated the effect of agencies then in operation on public opinion, the managers and directors of fraud proceeded early to make a diligent canvass and enumeration of the legal voters of each party everywhere. In the city of New York, in the spring of 1844, this secret census stated the whole number of actual qualified electors, at 44,000. However surprising to many this result may seem, and though much smaller in proportion to the whole white population than is found in most other political divisions of the country,—a careful examination of the various classes of people in the city will confirm this statement, which, though often disputed and condemned, was always repeated and firmly maintained by those acquainted with the facts of this private enumeration. Its probability appears stronger as the inquiry proceeds to the exhibition of the vast number of persons resident in the city who, from various causes, are excluded from the elective franchise. There are in New York many thousand resident

adult white males included in every census, who are not qualified as voters under the State Constitution, as "citizens of the United States who have resided in the State one year, and in the county six months." A vast transient population, inhabitants of hotels and lodging-houses, and other places of temporary abode, come hither on a venture, seeking a fortune or seeking employment, who, after a few weeks' or months' experience, return to the place whence they came, or to new scenes of trial, disappointed, and acquiring nothing but sad experience in the sober realization of the vanity of human wishes. Every great city abounds in temporary residents of this description, varying in rank from the literary and philosophical visionary, and the speculator in pecuniary enterprises, to the professional man, the journeyman mechanic and the day-laborer; but New York, from the metropolitan renown of its wealth and power, and its reputation for furnishing splendid opportunities of success to adventure and industry, is continually inundated by rash experimenters, confident of establishing a residence and securing wealth or subsistence—in numbers beyond the calculation of those who have not carefully observed this peculiar transient population. Many thousand foreigners annually landing here, after a few months, and many more after various periods less than five years, grow wise by the vain expenditure of their little means, and pass on to other places and regions, where labor is better compensated and more in demand, and where the necessaries of life are less costly. Multitudes of these unfortunate strangers die here from want, or the effect of change of climate and habits. The burials in the ground devoted to interments of persons connected with the Popish sect, amount to more than 29,000 within the last twelve years, (averaging fifty-four a week in 1844) and those in the "Potters' field" to more than 10,000, (1400 in 1844, averaging twenty-four a week), making of both these classes an average of not less than 4000 per annum, a large proportion of whom are, naturally, male adults. There are also many thousand seamen registered as residing here, of whom not one-sixth are in port at any election. All the inhabitants of sailors' boarding-houses, wherever registered, are also included in the nominal population of the city at every enumeration. More than a thousand of those whose home and property are here, may be found in Europe and other parts of the world, traveling on business or for pleasure, though properly returned as veritable citizens in the census. There are also more real residents of New York absent in the country and in other States, at any one time, than can be mentioned in any other place, on account of the wide-spread and important commercial and financial relations of the city. Many foreigners of the higher order, permanently located here, refuse to be naturalized, from prejudice or indifference. Many causes exclude others in large numbers from the exercise of the right of suffrage; but those here specified operate to much more effect in New York than elsewhere.

The number of legally qualified voters being fixed at 44,000, by actual canvass under secret direction, an enumeration or estimate of those who will not vote at any one election, was then made and subtracted. The number of those who, from peculiar habits, opinions, scruples, fears or religious singularities, (with those prevented by disease, sudden domestic calamity or accident,) though regularly entitled, fail to vote, is stated in the secret enumeration as not less than 2000, leaving 42,000 as the gross number of lawful ballots deposited in one day, when every practicable voter is brought to the polls. Of these, in 1844, the secret canvassers claimed less than 20,000 as the whole number of actual voters belonging to their party, supposed or professing to be connected with them. To their opponents, they allowed the remainder—about 22,000 lawful voters. They declared, also, that the opposite party would in one way and another commit frauds to increase their vote, when such momentous interests were at stake; and they pretended to estimate this fraudulent vote at 2500—making the total hostile vote nearly 25,000. They pronounced it necessary to increase their own strength to about 28,000, or, as it was generally stated to the gamblers in secret, before the election, from 27,500 to 28,500. It was supposed, among their subordinates, that 8000 or 10,000 illegal votes, in the city, would be sufficient to give them a safe preponderance on the ballot for Presidential electors, and would be decisive of the general result in the State and the Nation.

This supposition or estimate of the vote in New York city, was made up some months before the election, and was

communicated to the gamblers, as the basis of their operations; and before the election it came to the knowledge of some persons in the opposing party, engaged in researches into the frauds known to be purposed by those who could succeed only by such enormities. It is very incorrect, in many particulars, and was probably designed to be so by those who furnished it. The only particular in which this secret programme coincided with the actual result, was in the statement of the vote of the apparent majority. The final official returns gave that party 28,296 votes for their Presidential Electors. The other party had 26,385 for their candidates—a material excess, not accounted for in the estimates. The estimate of the whole lawful vote of the city, (42,000 and 44,000) was—though improbable, and so apparently untrue, as to be discredited by all hasty readers—quite correct. The statement of 20,000, as the lawful vote of their own party, was totally untrue—known to be false by those who made it. Their true lawful vote was some thousands less. From 42,000, the true (though incredibly small) number of legal voters, take 26,000, the actual number of votes given by the other party—the remainder (16,000) is the veritable statement of the whole number of constitutionally qualified electors, who, at the time when this enumeration was taken, belonged to that party or were induced to vote for their candidates. There was a small unintentional error, though the greatest was intentional. They (as might naturally be expected from bitter partisans, however careful) underestimated the vast latent power and influence of that mighty name which was the hope, the encouragement and strength of their opponents; and they also underestimated the degree of contempt with which their own pitiful nominations were regarded by many hundreds of the more intelligent and respectable of their own partisans. But the great difference between the statement and the truth, was made by a deliberate deception, practiced by them upon their allies and auxiliaries, the gamblers—the speculators in political chances and tricks, without whose interested coöperation and hopeful aid they would have failed of securing some of the essential conditions of success in their stupendous inventions of political crime. If they had presented to their kindred cold-blooded community of crime the exact truth—had they announced to them that out of the lawful votes of the city their adversaries would give to their great candidate 26,000 votes against the paltry 16,000 which would constitute the whole force displayed in support of the insignificant, nameless creature of accident whom they had been compelled in desperation to oppose to him, they would have been deserted by the whole mass of these formidable auxiliaries, the "sporting characters" and betting men. The gamblers were to be duped, if necessary;—deceived, they were, at all events. The gamblers knew nothing of the great plans of those who thus operated upon them. They were not trusted with the details, but were assured (and *insured* by pecuniary pledges) that the party of fraud should poll not less than 27,500, and probably as many as 28,500 ballots, perhaps some thousands more. They were told that their opponents would not give over 25,000 votes, genuine and spurious. Many were, therefore, on this information, induced to bet on 3,000 majority in the city; and some of the most sagacious and experienced lost largely by staking a great amount of money on 3,200, which was considered safe by the most intelligent, until eleven o'clock, A. M., on the day of the Presidential Election.

The first great object in thus enlisting and interesting the gamblers, was to cause them to pledge their money to the success of the apparently weaker cause. When the unexpected and offensive result of their nominating Convention in Baltimore was made known here on the first of June, not a wager was offered in its favor, or could be obtained on any terms, for some time. Their politicians received the intelligence with unconcealed disgust and despair. No gambler even thought of speculating on the chances of a nomination thus viewed and received. But this hopeless inactivity did not long continue. There was a mysterious gigantic agency already in vigorous movement, which had been organized some months previous, for the purposes of another Presidential candidate, whose peculiar, devoted, and confidential friends were alone entrusted in this city with its direction and execution, or with the knowledge of its existence. Those who had toiled in its construction, and continued operation thus far, though linked in feeling and in their fortunes with the prospects of ONE MAN, under whose control they moved, were

yet not devoting their time and energies merely to the success of a favorite chief, or a party, or a cause, or an abstraction. Personal devotion of his followers to himself was a quality never expected or sought by that leader. Political attachment, secured only by disinterested preference, respect or admiration, however well-founded, is a tie too frail and uncertain for the dependence of a life devoted wholly to official employment, profit and advancement. A more practical and lasting bond of union, in spirit and action, was found in "the cohesive attraction of public plunder," as it has been somewhat too bitterly styled by a man eminent for his disappointments in attempting to employ it. The advancement of the principal was promoted and secured only by the guarantees of a business-like compact, by whose faithful execution his supporters and assistants were to be compensated in case of his success, in stations graded according to the amount and value of the service rendered to the general enterprise, and the number of years during which fidelity had been maintained. Political enthusiasm was discarded in these vital arrangements of the true origin of power, and displaced by a safe, unpretending, ever-wakeful, and unvarying motive.

The arrangements thus carefully prepared under the direction of such powers, were not demolished, nor long suspended, even by the overwhelming change in the aspect of public affairs produced by the action of the National Convention in rejecting the candidate for whom and under whom the scheme had been prepared and put in operation. Brief counsel and communication sufficed to secure the complete transfer of the entire obligations, pledges and secret agencies of the rejected candidate to the new substitute, conditioned upon which followed a like transfer of all the services, duties, and mysterious machinery of his supporters from the first to the second. No disturbance of the parts of the great and complicated system, or of their mutual arrangements, occurred. All arrangements, from the highest to the lowest, in an instant moved on unchanged.

At this moment it was that the communicaton was opened with the gamblers, to secure their coöperation, intelligence, and sympathetic interest. They were told that by large bets at present odds, or "even," a sure result could be obtained, so contrary to actual public expectation at that time, that none but those initiated in the secret movement would dare take the risks, and that thus a magnificent monopoly of gains, unparalleled in all the operations of chance, skill or fraud, would be secured in a moment. These assurances were made decisive and unquestionable by furnishing therewith to the speculators as much evidence of the power of accomplishment as could be given without a betrayal of the agencies and details. No perilous secret was entrusted to mere gamblers and fraudulent adventurers. The information was given with very desirable particularity; and the money was paid by them in return, not so much in the character of a fee or compensation for the intelligence, as by way of employing the means of making it effective and profitable. The money thus paid to the secret political agency was, in fact, but a form of insurance on the wagers taken with the knowledge of the movement. The gambler, knowing all, collects his available money, and goes about the city seeking the various bets which are offered on suitable terms. In all places of general resort and political conversation, he gathers up the random wagers of incautious partisans, and at every boastful declaration of confidence in the success of the greater candidate. compels the speaker either to suffer an implication of false professions, or to deposit his money in testimony of his courage and hope. "What will you bet?" "How much?" "I'll take that bet?" "Put up your money—here's mine?" "Will you double the stakes?" "Will any other gentleman make the same bet?" "Any amount you please, at such odds!" These were the expressions passing thousands of times each day and night all over the city, while the gamblers were in this way "subscribing to the stock" of the NEW PLAN, and thereby providing for its successful operation. Many who engaged in this speculation to the largest amounts did not appear personally in the negotiations, but employed agents and runners to act for them with various sums, until the aggregated tens, fifties, and hundreds, equaled thousands and tens of thousands. The larger the amount of money thus wagered, the more was expended to insure the winning of it. Thus, abundance of means flowed into the treasury of the secret council to supply all the requirements of the enterprise. It had been first organized and begun upon money derived from other sources.

Its continuation, in the summer and autumn, was largely dependent on these liberal contributions, which, in fact, were paid, or were subsequently to be paid, by their political opponents—were actually only advances made by the gamblers on what may be considered the drafts or notes which were to fall due after the election. Every silly, mercenary member of the opposing party, who thus thought to put money into his pockets by betting upon what was then indeed the CERTAINTY of the success of his eminent candidate, did in this way serve to support and promote the operations tending to his defeat. If the foolish, bragging, betting friends of that great man could have been content with the certainty of the accomplishment of the one great object on which the public and individual good alike depended, it would have remained a certainty. The whole result was not effected but by their mean and pitiful folly, in thus becoming at once the agents and the dupes, the beasts of burden and the victims, of those whose money they themselves were expecting soon to receive and enjoy without rendering an equivalent. The tolerance of this despicable and dishonorable vice of betting, this vilest and most immoral and mischievous form of gambling, cost the nation all it has lost in that momentous struggle! Let every man in the land, who bore the least part in this great mass of stupid wickedness, take to his conscience his share of the responsibility, and remember, with self-abasement, this unsearched, unrepented, unforgiven sin. In whatever day the people's retribution may come—in ruin, misery, blood, or infamy—let him share the evil, and confess his agencies in its production—and "let *this* sit heavy on his soul" in that dark to-morrow!

But the political action of the gamblers was not limited to this very simple series of operations. They did not content themselves with merely furnishing the means, and leaving the work to be done therewith by those from whom they received this information, trusting that the prediction would be accomplished by the prophets. It was understood, indeed, of course, by those who invoked their co-operation and animated their hopes of gain, that the gamblers, "sporting-men," and criminals, were to exercise in their own way, in natural fellowship, their usual arts in the business of elections. Wherever pecuniarily interested in the result of a political contest, they employed their own peculiar agencies to secure such a result as would accord with their arrangements for winning. They had been accustomed to rely on the General Committees of the party, not only for *intelligence* of the movements and majorities designed, but also for *direction* as to the mode and amount of frauds to be accomplished by their own action. Under the operations of the "Old Plan" of fraud, had grown up a new branch of business, a regular profession,—the manufacture of spurious votes by associated or individual enterprise. A large portion of the gamblers had assumed and invented a trade which may be styled—that of "Election-brokers." Suppose that a man, one familiar with their abominations, wishes to be nominated by the regular convention or committee of the party, and then to be elected against any dissatisfaction created among men professing decency and moral principle. They contract with him first, to secure his nomination by packing the Ward meetings with rioters ready to mob any man who opposes him—and next, to elect him, by bringing to the polls the man who will put into the ballot-boxes *as many votes as are necessary to give him a plurality.* The extensive and multifarious character of such operations, implies a necessity of a *classification* of agencies, and naturally suggests, as in all great systematic inventions, "a division of labor." The "election-brokers" therefore have, what may be called "contractors" under them, who engage, for certain stipulated sums, (to be paid after the official returns of the election show the work to be properly done,) to furnish the required majorities, to carry particular Wards and districts, so as to secure the success of the candidates named, and guarantee the bets thereon pending. The election-brokers, after due arrangements with the political managers and candidates, having ascertained the exact legal canvass of the section in question, go to their agents, who, for reasonable considerations, contract to do the needful work. The subordinates call out and enrol their gangs of voters, led by their several directors, (termed "captains of squads,") and issue orders for their location and employment. The bargain is generally made in these terms: "I have bet ——— dollars that ——— ——— will have —— majority in —— Ward or district. If I win it, you shall have half." A small pecuniary advance,

by way of "retaining fee," designed also to furnish certain preliminary disbursements at the drinking-places where the rank and file are to be found and enlisted, is, generally, a matter of course. The "captain of the squad" picks up his men, the ragged vagabonds, the jail-birds, the criminals, the hopeless and friendless victims of vice and want, who rejoice in the elective franchise as their means of waging that revengeful war on society in which their misery finds bitter satisfaction, when they see the prosperous and respected classes humbled and defeated. These "*enfans perdus*" are provided with their temporary homes, each with several lodging-places in different election-districts; and are encouraged with liquor and frequent little gratuities, which make them to know *their friends*. They are schooled in their duties, and are told from whom they must receive their ballots on election-day, and under whose direction they must deposit them. Many hundreds of them are wholly uneducated, and are consequently unable to read a single letter, or distinguish a name on the ticket which they carry. Such men must know whom to trust when they offer a ballot; and they are content to know that they vote as pleases their true friends, the enemies of the aristocracy, the advocates of "the largest liberty." The man of business, the merchant, the employer, the professional man, feels that he has done a great work when he has deposited his one vote, and goes to his ordinary occupation afterwards with infinite self-satisfaction, as a patriot who has done his whole duty, and has deserved well of the commonwealth. The vagabond and cheat does more at the same moment, and, as he thinks, does better. Feeble and faint is the attachment to the elective franchise of him who votes but once in a day. The foresworn assertor of "the largest liberty" will offer his ballot as long as he can do so without question, and will vote from sunrise to sunset, if unchallenged.

Who doubts this? No man who is not willing to pass for a fool or hypocrite, among knaves of his own breed, as well as among the whole community. How many men can be found in the city of New York within three hours who are ready, at five dollars a head, to swear an *alibi*, or that they are worth any amount of money necessary to make "straw-bail? How many "Tombs-lawyers" are there, regular members of the honorable legal profession, who are ready to suborn that perjury? How many men are there in this city who consider professional perjury as part of their regular means of a livelihood? Having decided these important questions in moral statistics, let those who volunteer the answer, say—how many of these professional perjurers and practiced impostors are idle on election-day? He who can answer these inquiries can give pregnant replies to some others in the same connexion. The sooner they speak, the better for the cause of justice and truth.

These are some of the materials of political crime created by the conditions of American metropolitan society; and these were some of the modes of their employment in 1844. Details might be multiplied, but to no purpose. All these particulars belonged only to the "old plan" of fraud. As might be imagined, it was varied, modified and extended for the great vital emergency. All the agencies of crime were invoked in that final struggle, and were summoned to do their worst.

Under the impulse of occasion, thus suggested, old fraud developed itself in new forms of crime, and "sought out many inventions;" yet it left much to be done—more than was dreamed of by many who thought themselves masters of the arts of villany. The whole resources of the old-fashioned plan were expended and exhausted. The business of fraudulent naturalization was prosecuted as long as any man of foreign birth could be brought up to swear (even though ignorant of the language) to five years' residence, with due notice of intentions, of which, forged certificates, or those of dead men, were always in readiness for the first claimant. The business of "colonization" was also conducted by them with accustomed vigor and enlarged scope. As the law deems a single night's residence in a ward or town or district sufficient, arrangements were made by which a large number of young men boarding in one district to the eve of the election were located in new lodgings in other districts on that night. Presenting themselves at the polls, if challenged, (as they would naturally be, from their not being in the preliminary canvass,) they took the oath and voted with full legal security against the pains and penalties of perjury. They then went at their leisure to the election-district of their ordinary residence, where, being personally well-known, or at any

rate included in the regular lists of voters by both parties, they might expect to vote without being challenged. This class of voters were mostly such as would refuse to perjure themselves; and in every instance, where they were challenged they refused the oath, with pretended indignation at the implied suspicion, and the apparently wanton insult of a challenge in a district where they were so familiarly known as legal habitual residents of long standing. In many instances, this character was so well played, that the challenge was withdrawn, even when given on well founded suspicion. But wherever this form of fraud was foreknown, and the oath was insisted on by the challenging party, the apparently honest voters, who were instructed to play this trick, walked away baffled, without any subsequent attempt. It was a fraud not confined to the city, and was equally practicable in rural sections; for the State constitution which requires of the elector one year's residence in the State and six months' residence in the county, leaves to every man the liberty of locating himself in any town, ward or election district, at the shortest imaginable period before he votes. All men who have no family, household or fixed domicile, all mere transient persons, lodgers in hotels and boarding-houses, can, therefore, legally change their homes from one place to another in a few minutes, and may safely swear that they are residents of every district in which they have lodged during the night previous, or intend to lodge on the night succeeding. This looseness of legal provisions has led to the notoriously extensive adoption, by both parties, of the practice of transferring voters of this description from sections where there are large majorities to those where the preponderance is small or doubtful. The law allows the inspectors of election to ask each man, under oath, "whether he came into that district for the purpose of voting at that election;" but, whatever his answer, if he afterwards take the general oath as to qualifications, his vote must be received. This description of imposture, however immoral and contrary to the rights of the true residents of any locality, has acquired such force by long usage, as to be deemed hardly requiring concealment or disguise, inasmuch as no conviction of a breach of the statute by such conduct could ever occur. As an evasion of law and a perversion of the elective franchise it had a continually demoralizing effect on the community, and led the way to increasing enormities.

The penalty for illegal voting, or for the attempt, is merely a fine *not exceeding* two hundred dollars, or imprisonment for *not more than* six months. False swearing in these matters, like wilful perjury of any other description, is punishable by imprisonment in the State prison for a term not exceeding ten years.

The old measure of bringing in persons from other places and States, to give fraudulent votes, was also revived, as far as practicable, though on a smaller scale, proportionally, than in some merely local elections. The election in Connecticut occurred on the day previous—in New Jersey simultaneously and one day additional—leaving little time for the transfer of voters except from a few of the nearer portions of those States. From Pennsylvania, where the election closed more than three days previous, a considerable number were sent to New York for this purpose. Attempts were also made to introduce some from Bergen county, New Jersey. This form of fraud, though not made of essential importance, was yet employed as far as was convenient and secure —on the general principle of "leaving nothing undone which could be done."

These varied operations were sustained mainly by the gamblers on their private responsibility. The regularly constituted representative bodies of the party styled "General Committees" had nothing to do with these matters as associations, whatever many of their members might do in other connexions. The business of naturalization was as usual, indeed, in the charge of a special committee throughout the season, and was made no secret; but delegate associations were not allowed to have anything to do with the mysteries. No man of tact or experience could ever suppose that elective assemblies like these partisan delegations were capable of keeping secrets so vital to the cause. The General Committees in that party were outside show, successfully designed to deceive the public and many of their own members, who were silly enough to imagine them the veritable depositories of the mysteries and the seat of directive power. The great essential work and control was in other hands, wholly unknown to most of them. In both the great political parties, membership of these bodies is sought as an honor by silly office-seekers, who imagine that it is a station which gives them dignity

and influence, and strengthens their pretensions. A large number of the members are therefore totally incompetent to their supposed duties; and no party secret could be safe among them. The committees are useful for certain forms of proceeding and parade, and for some actual work—for the calling of public meetings, the publication of addresses, the ordering of "nominating conventions," for directing and superintending the preliminary canvass; but that is all. To the deeper and more important business they are a mere screen.

Similar in their purpose and employment were the various voluntary associations and "clubs" of pompous designation, which attracted so much notice during the great contest. The systematic employment of these was a secondary suggestion, caused by accident, and promoted by the folly of the newspaper press of the opposing party, which gave them a distinction and usefulness not before suggested to the managers. The most notorious of these, of whose performances, real and imaginary, so much has been said, was formed in a mere drunken frolic by a vulgar and ignorant throng, who sallied from a spacious grog-shop in Barclay street, on the night of the 4th of July, 1844, on a sudden impulse, and after marching around the streets awhile with drum and fife, resolved to form a military company of a partisan character, to which they proposed to give the style of "Guards," prefixing the name of the favorite drinking-shop where the inspiration of the movement originated. It was soon joined by a few ambitious ruffians, one of whom was soon made the head of it; and at his suggestion its designation was altered to that of a "Club," for purposes of political display. About eight professed pugilists were added to it; and a large number of notorious felons and convicts mingled with it. The criminals generally were soon taught to regard it as their own peculiar association, and with these and the gamblers, and many weak young men, aspiring to the reputation of great wickedness, it soon swelled its numbers to between 1,000 and 2,000. After figuring in a few meetings and processions, it acquired such notoriety from ill-advised and unnecessary denunciations of it by the organs of the opposite political party, that it was recommended to the managers of its own party as a valuable auxiliary, and was thenceforth regularly employed and paid as a fighting-club, to bully and assault peaceable citizens, to create riots, disturb meetings and processions, and create among the floating mass of the people the impression that the superiority of physical force was on that side of the question. That loudly-denounced Club, the object of so much notice and alarm, was a mere bugbear and stalking-horse, used to frighten the opposing party, and keep their vigilance and means occupied so as to withdraw attention from the real agencies of mischief, and cover the most formidable movements from view. For the purposes of fraud, the Club, composed in large proportion of the most notorious ruffians whose faces were familiar to thousands, was perfectly useless, and was never used; though great pains were taken by its members and backers to give the impression that they were organized for that end. They were too ignorant, silly and noisy, to be capable of playing their part in any scheme requiring caution or art. Not one of their leaders had the intellect for such work, and their only office was that of obstreperous brutality. They were gladly used by the party managers as a show and means of violence, and as an object to occupy the anxiety and watchfulness of their opponents while the great work went on in secret. The Club was to the opposing party what the red flag is to the bull, who madly rushes at it in the arena, while the *matador* securely and quietly thrusts the sword into his spine as he passes the real danger to assault an imaginary foe.

In this protracted statement, has now been set forth a mass of agencies apparently capable of producing any amount of fraud on the elective franchise which might be desired by those who employed them. Some thousands of illegal votes were thus deposited in the ballot-boxes of this city and similar places at the Presidential election. The precise number need not be stated here. The great question is—"were they enough to make the great result what it was?" The eyes of the guilty agents of the mightiest scheme of fraud and the truly effective crime, will strain anxiously and fearfully over this paragraph to learn whether the threatened revelation of their crime ends here; and great would be their satisfaction—high their exulting confidence, could they at this point be told—"this is all!" But it is NOT all. Conspirators! Monsters of crime!—already fattening on the prey brought

down by the secret shaft! The blood-hound search that you smilingly think you have eluded, has tracked you to your inmost den. Up and look to yourselves! for the avengers of a nation's blood and tears are already upon you.

All these that have been disclosed thus far are but the vestibule and courts of the temple. Open now the penetralia of the hideous sanctuary; and behold

"THE MYSTERY OF MYSTERIES!"

In the month of February, 1844, was fully begun in New York (and elsewhere) this plan. A hundred men (so stated in round number) were in secret organization, under the style of a "COUNCIL OF PEACE," and were in the laborious performance of several specified functions with one common purpose. They obtained a careful enumeration of all the legal voters in every election-district, with the proportions of political parties. They secured the collection or responsible pledge of about $20,000 as a commencing capital stock, drawing this large amount mostly from a few persons of great wealth and high standing in the community, absolutely devoted by prejudice or interest to their party, and resolved to retrieve its then failing fortunes and secure its success, by any and every means which might be necessary, without consideration of the legality or moral propriety of the same. Their assurance of the observance of secresy between them and all persons concerned, and of the exact application of the money to the assigned purpose, was derived from the pledge of the approbation and supervision of the plan by a few distinguished persons ranking above themselves, and above all. The object proposed was—not the probability—but THE ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY OF SUCCESS in the pending contest for the supreme power in the State and Nation, which was guaranteed to the contributors on the one hand by the unquestionable authority of men beyond distrust, and on the other hand by the perfection and irresistible power of the scheme itself. The money came forth, in large donations, from the long-accumulated hoards of covetous bankers, brokers and traders, and even from the treasured spoils of political victories, where individual wealth had been the product of partisan triumph. There was among them one man who, with very high honors, had also attained riches to such an amount that he could have contributed one-half of the required sum without curtailing his abundance; and had other sources failed, his hopes and prospects, as connected with the final object, would have made the donation of the whole apparently a profitable investment of his capital. There were others who had derived large fortunes from party favor and government patronage, to whom singly the entire sum would not have been the tithe of their accumulated profits. There were others, totally unconnected with public employments and political honors, who saw their private interests so far involved in existing legislation and its desired changes, that they promptly and willingly gave one thousand dollars each, in the hope of depriving of the benefit of Protective duties all who produced at home what they wished to introduce from abroad, and of destroying all revenue legislation for the benefit of every class, except those who "go down to the sea in ships and do business on the great waters." Several importers and great ship-owners gave their thousands to effect the ultimate removal of all restrictions upon foreign trade, except the imperative limitation of that portion of it in which they were interested, to vessels owned or employed by themselves. There were some such who, but for the enactment of the present revenue laws, would have remained in their original connexion with the party which they abandoned and denounced for having extended to others the discriminative regulations before enjoyed by themselves alone—justifying their avarice, by impudently declaring themselves opposed to the Tariff in principle, meaning thereby—INTEREST. As to the uses for which their money was designed, they sought not to be informed. They paid it as a fee for certain services to be rendered to them,—a compensation in advance, for promised benefits,—an ordinary, "fair business transaction." COMMERCIAL morality, commercial honor, exacted no further investigation of the mode in which their donations were employed. Though fraud, brutality, perjury, were the means, and though national infamy and ruin and war be the result,—each of them, like the Roman procurator, will wash his hands, saying "I AM INNOCENT OF THIS BLOOD."

The professional gamblers were not yet called in; for their season of usefulness had not come. But there were several devoted wealthy partisans, large contributors, who were as prompt and

acute to avail themselves of these opportunities for speculation by political wagers, as they would have been to secure the stock of a corporation whose speedy increase of value they had been privileged to foreknow. The donations were easily covered by bets corresponding in amount, based on the knowledge of operations in progress by which success was insured.

The tremendous exigency forced that unscrupulous party to the invention of new machinery and the employment of novel agencies of fraud. The vicious, criminal and infamous classes, upon whose action they had been accustomed to rely, were not competent to the perilous difficulties of the crisis. The respectable, "honorable," unimpeachable men of the party, hitherto quietly profiting by crimes with whose details they were not supposed to be acquainted, and which they might know only by inference, were now compelled to come forward and put their hands directly to the wicked work on which depended their rescue from annihilation and oblivion. Each who hoped anything from success, whether high station, official honor and great endowment, power or fame, whether legislative action or executive patronage, brought his own peculiar gift to the common storehouse of munition. As the wealthy contributed their money, the powerful chiefs of the party brought together the fruits of many years of sagacious observation and instructive experience; and the mightiest minds yielded their most subtle inventions, as the details will show. Over all was thrown the impenetrable cover and defense of a combination of respectability, supposed probity and external virtue, capable of defying suspicion and baffling scrutiny.

That great school of political crime which has had its seat in the city of New York and the Capitol of the State for a quarter of a century, and from whose poisoned fountains have poured forth streams of corruption through the whole Union, gathered all its terrible resources, enlarged its theory and its practice, corrected its rules, rehearsed its lessons, and strengthened the obedient confidence of its disciples. Its two great masters were in its councils, the two survivors of the three founders. Never was any product of the human mind more rationally and logically deduced from experiment and observed fact, than that peculiar science of political roguery, for which New York is famous as the source. The origin was purely experimental, both in the Capitol as to the management of State affairs, and in New York city in the inventions of fraud. It was a perfect example of the Inductive Philosophy.

The sum of money required for a basis of operations, and the canvass of the lawful vote of the city (obtained by the help of the old organizations in the General Committee and the Ward and District Committees) were placed by the "Council of one hundred" in the hands of a select executive body, a central Directory called "the Five," though not implying by that title that only *five* persons were associated in this inner council, signory or cabinet. Five however, were always on duty, and active daily. "The Five" were invested at once and throughout with absolute, discretionary power. They called on the larger council (the 100) from time to time, for money, for information and for labor, and received all without question from them. They made these demands and issued mandates, directed all action, appropriated and expended money, but *made no reports*, and were held to no accountability to any person or persons whatever. Perfect secresy and irresponsibility as to their actions—was the first law of their organization.

Before the end of winter, in the opening of 1844, the Secret Council of Five had matured and put in active operation a plan which will be pronounced by the world the greatest product of human villainy. It has not a parallel or equal in the history of inventions.

Another hundred men (the exact number not being essential to the main fact) were carefully selected by the hundred before described under the title of the "Council of Peace,"—possessing many peculiar qualifications, requisite to the exact performance of certain prescribed services, essential to the salvation and continued existence of "the party." The larger council (gathered from every section of the city and almost every class in society) furnished the names of these individuals, after due inquiry and deliberation. The hundred picked men were required to possess these traits and endowments. They must be all young men, *unmarried*, between the ages of twenty-one and thirty, of such a personal appearance, physiognomy, complexion, bearing, air and deportment as would

render them exceedingly difficult to distinguish among thousands of ordinary men. They were to be men totally devoid of all striking peculiarity of aspect; their eyes, hair, lineaments, stature, walk, and movements, were to be perfectly common-place. In dress and externals, they were to be alike free from anything that could excite attention, fix remembrance, or cause identification by any ordinary observer. They were all required to be AMERICANS by *birth*, totally *free from all foreign* peculiarities of *accent*, manner or deportment. As to occupation, and position in life, they were to be generally journeymen-mechanics, employed in large establishments, where there are few workmen known to all their fellow-laborers, and where the persons engaged frequently change their masters from fancy or irregular habits, without exciting inquiry or attracting notice. Journeymen in printing offices, in shoe-shops, tailor-shops, machine-shops, stone-cutters' yards, masons' and other builders' employments, and so on, wherever large numbers of men are engaged for short periods, and change their location often, on slight causes or on none at all, without imputation of singularity. They were all to be quiet, unobtrusive, silent men, known to few, and disinclined by nature and habit to seek acquaintances or keep them. They were required to be strictly temperate and virtuous in their habits, wholly unknown to the vicious and dissolute, and never seen in grog-shops, or any places where irregular or troublesome intimacies are contracted. They were to be the most ordinary samples of the great multitude, as far as possible, wholly indistinguishable from the mass.

One hundred men of this class and description were studiously selected from thousands in the city, in the winter of 1843–4. It need not be stated that they were bitter, devoted, unscrupulous partisans, capable of any crime in maintenance of their political principles, which they could commit without danger of detection or punishment. They were the very embodiment of those horrid abstractions of political crime so long breathed into the ears of the people by the masters of the arts of hypocrisy and imposition. They were men imbued, from their very birth, and through their whole life, with envy and hatred of those more elevated and successful classes with whose interests the opposing party was believed to be associated.

These men, with many others of similar character, named severally by individuals among the larger secret council, unknown as a whole to the whole body, were reported to the secret Executive Council of Five, who, after due examination and painful discrimination, selected the required number of those who gave evidence of possessing in an eminent degree the very peculiar combination of requisites. The chosen hundred were then taken, singly, into instruction by their employers, (personally unknown to them, and likely to remain so,) and were carefully taught the tasks required of them, while their compensation was assigned to them. First, they were engaged on regular weekly pay, with wages abundant for all their personal wants and for the exigencies of their new business, so proportioned that they should derive from it a nett income fully equal to the receipts of their ordinary trades and pursuits. This engagement was to last until the Presidential election, and was subject to a renewal for an indefinite period, on like terms, with a prospect of actual PERMANENCE. Next, they were called up singly by the secret Council of Five, enrolled, instructed in their duties, and drilled to their exact performance. They were directed to seek cheap lodgings in certain Election-Districts, selecting as their places of abode in each, such houses as were commonly occupied by persons of their own rank and condition, transient boarders and unmarried laborers. Each of them was furnished with a "book," which was simply a piece of paste-board, stiff paper or leather, bent double in the form and size of an ordinary pocket "bank-book," upon the inside of which was pasted a corresponding piece of firm white paper inscribed with a complete plan of the whole city, containing the boundaries and numbers of every Ward and Election District. With this "book" always safely placed on their persons, they were directed to go about, locating themselves from day to day in as many obscure boarding-houses as possible, each in a different district—in each place giving a different name, and then marking, on the plan of the city, the number of the house, the street, and the name under which they had taken lodgings. They were ordered to pay for their lodgings (at the rate of 6¼ cents—12½ cents a night) regularly, and to assume the appearance of ordinary plain working-men, going in and out from time to time in such a way as to seem neither to seek nor shun notice from the other occupants. They were to busy them-

selves continually with visiting these several places of abode, and after having filled their entire list, were to be seen in each of them daily, or every other day, or as often as was physically possible—in the day-time, passing up to their sleeping-place as though for some small article left there—and in the night, apparently retiring to rest, and subsequently withdrawing in such a manner as to avoid suspicion of anything singular. They were to manage so that two days should rarely pass without their being seen in the house by the keepers of it, with whom occasionally they were to exchange a few words without contracting any intimacy, —the object being to secure an impression on the mind of the person in charge of the house that his lodger was an ordinary, quiet person, of tolerably regular habits, but not to make him so familiar with him as to make future identification easy.

On a fixed hour of a certain day in every week, each one of these men was instructed to present himself to his employers at a specified place—generally, if not always, in a private house inconspicuously situated, and occupied by some person associated with the secret plan. The disciple was commanded to appear in every instance at the precise moment appointed; as—if at a quarter past eight, P. M.—he was to present himself exactly at that time—neither at ten minutes nor twenty minutes past eight. If detained unavoidably, he was to allow the appointment to pass and not to come again until his next regularly recurring stated moment of reporting himself. At these appointed periods, he stood in his turn before two or more of his employers, to whom (during the time he was engaged in fixing his various locations) he first handed his book, and reported the additional places of apparent abode which he had secured since his last interview with them. If he seemed to have been slow in the work, he was asked the causes of delay, and was admonished to use all practicable and safe despatch, because it was vitally necessary that in every instance, without one variation or exception, the apparent residences should be secured, and the whole number of multiplied false locations occupied, BEFORE THE FIRST OF MAY, 1844. He reported his expenditures, on account for lodgings during the interval, and received his required portion of money for the ensuing period. He stated any noticeable circumstances occurring, or embarrassments or difficulties encountered, and asked for any new directions of which he had felt the need. He received such repetition of previous instructions and such new counsels as seemed necessary to his thorough mastery of the art—was cautioned against any special perils of exposure incurred by any negligence or defect on his part, and sent forth to the continuation of his work.

The whole object of this gigantic plan and intense labor was, of course, to secure to this body of men, what should appear to any ordinary observation veritable *bona-fide* residences in the numerous Election-Districts assigned to them severally, and to have them so maintained, that the keepers and true occupants of any house so used, should be able, in case of investigation, to attest and swear, as of their actual knowledge, that the man in question was a regular permanent resident there—*not* a transient person or occasional lodger, but for nearly the whole year, and (as it would prove on inquiry in very many instances,) a longer time an inmate of the house than any other boarder in it —having (as all would sincerely witness) constantly lodged there six, eight or nine months, and regularly paid his board.

The necessary precautions against accidental identification by persons meeting them in two or more different places, were duly taken and continually multiplied. Ready answers to all casual inquiries from the occupants of the houses, from their own former acquaintances and fellow-workmen with whom they had once been employed in the same shop were also provided, rehearsed to them and laboriously impressed upon them. They were trained to constant vigilance, acute perception, quick observation, unobtrusive, unnoticeable demeanor, dress, air, language and tone. All their faculties were devoted unremittedly and exclusively to this one study and task. They were from the first moment of their engagement and enrolment, withdrawn from all other employment, and freed from the necessity of their former labor, by a steady weekly compensation in their new business. Their whole time, duly allowing what was needful for repose and relaxation, was occupied in this labor—first, of going about and securing lodgings, and afterwards, of visiting their numerous places of nominal abode daily, to keep up the appearance and formal evidence of continuous occupancy. If their landlords should happen to remark —"You have been away for two or

three days"—or "I havn't seen you about, lately"—they were to answer—"O, I have a brother [or friend] who is a watchman in [some remote district,] and he has been unwell, and I took his place for a night or two."—Or "I have been sitting up with a sick relative or friend."—Or "I have been to visit my father in the country," &c. &c. The details of these artifices are interminable. To repeat all, would require a volume.

But at last comes the actual work of THE GREAT DAY, for which all this mighty scheme was prepared. On the day of election, the picked man presents himself at the polls in the district where he rises, and offers his vote. He appears to the inspectors and challengers a plain, simple, humble, quiet, decent laboring man, an American by birth, with nothing to distinguish him from the mass of voters. He gives his name and residence; the challengers of both parties find it "all right;" it is recorded in the canvass taken by each, weeks ago. In forty-nine cases out of fifty, his vote is received unquestioned; and he passes unnoticed, forgotten in a moment, and for ever—wholly undistinguishable by the most discerning memory, among the hundreds of forms with which the wearied eye grows dim on that day. But—suppose, by accident, ignorance or excessive caution, his vote is challenged. Does he offer to "swear it in?" NO. He has been schooled for months to the prevention of the necessity of this crime. He has been strictly warned by his employers *never*, in any instance, *to commit perjury*. He merely assumes a look of surprise, mingled with a very slightly offended air, and respectfully asks—"Why is my vote challenged?" Or "Who challenged my vote?" "I am well known as a voter in this district. I have lived here steadily for almost a year. I have not slept out of the Ward one night in six months. If any gentleman doubts it, just let him step with me to the house where I board and satisfy himself. I shall not take the oath. I am a poor man, and work for a living, and should like to vote; but I shan't swear it in." "It's the first time my vote was ever challenged." "I am a native of this country, and have always voted since I was of age; and now I'm challenged where hundreds of Irishmen, who havn't been five years in America, vote without being questioned." These expostulations are uttered in a tone, regular grading from mild remonstrance in the outset, to apparently honest indignation at the close, with which he departs, if the challenge is not withdrawn; but it is almost a certainty that the challenger would be satisfied that he had erred, or would at any rate yield to the adroit allusion to foreign voters.

If it were possible that in spite of all these precautions and artifices, he be suspected, accused, arrested—what then? For this, too, has he been prepared, and if he is identified as having voted in two or more places, he knows that all the inventions and tricks of the law will be exercised to shield him. The best counsel will defend him, jurors will secretly befriend him, and JUDGES in more courts than one, (who knowingly owe their places to the success of such crimes, and expect therefrom continuance or promotion,) will also exert every possible power to save him. If convicted, his sentence shall be the lightest, (six months being the utmost extent which the law allows,) and, if not *pardoned* by an executive officer equally conscious of the mighty crime, and counting on its repetition for future power and greatness, the prison shall be no injury to him; he shall be paid for the time occupied in prison more than he can earn at liberty.

This is enough. Here is a masterpiece of fraudulent invention by which any required number of votes can be given at any future day, *beyond all possibility of prevention, even when foreknown*. Add the perjury, (which was not found necessary before,) and what can obstruct the execution of the plan? To follow and detect each man would make it necessary to send two or three men after more than two-thirds of the lawful voters of the city, to dog them from morning till night. It is absurd to think of prevention. As for the much-vaunted "registry law," it would only facilitate the fraud and furnish additional securities against detection; and it was, in fact, from the exigencies created by that law, that the first suggestions of this now perfect scheme were derived.

The great problem of American government is solved. Those who have invented, elaborated and perfected this mysterious and tremendous engine, retain control of it still; and by it, they and their regular constituted successors will rule this land while the elective franchise exists in it. The revelation of the mystery is a detection at which they can laugh, in contemptuous security, safely defying attack and deriding denunciation.

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